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THEOLOGICAL INSTITUTES:

Or, a View of the

EVIDENCES, DOCTRINES, MORALS, AND INSTITUTIONS

OF

CHRISTIANITY.

BY RICHARD WATSON.

A NEW EDITION,

WITH A COPIOUS INDEX, AND AN ANALYSIS,

BY J. M'CLINTOCK.

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PART SECOND

CONTINUED.

DOCTRINES OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Fall of Man—Doctrine of Original Sin.

The Scriptural character of God having been adduced from the inspired writings, we now proceed, in pursuance of our plan, to consider their testimony as to man, both in the estate in which he was first created, and in that lapsed condition into which the first act of disobedience plunged the first pair and their whole posterity.

Beside that natural government of God, which is exercised over material things, over mere animals, and over rational beings, considered merely as parts of the great visible creation, which must be conserved and regulated so as to preserve its order and accomplish its natural purposes; there is evidence of the existence of an administration of another kind. This we call *moral* government, because it has respect to the actions of rational creatures, considered as good and evil, which qualities are necessarily determined, at least to us, by a law, and that law the will of God. Whether things are good or evil by a sort of eternal fitness or unfitness in themselves, and not made so by the will of God, is a question which has been agitated from the days of the schoolmen. Like many other similar questions, however, this is a profitless one; for as we cannot comprehend the eternal reason and fitness of things on the whole, we could have no certain means of determining the moral qualities of things, without a declaration of the will of God, who alone knows them both absolutely and relatively, possibly and really, to perfection. As for the distinctions that some things are good or evil antecedently to the will of God; some consequently upon it, and some both one and the other; it may be observed that, if by the will of God we are to understand one of his attributes, nothing can be antecedent to his will; and if we understand it to mean the declared will of God, in the form of command or law, then nothing can be rewardable or punishable antecedent to the will of God, which only in that form becomes the rule of the conduct of his creatures; and is, in all the instances with which we are acquainted, revealed, under the sanction of rewards or punishments.

"But is the will of God the cause of his law? Is his will the original of right and wrong? Is a thing therefore right because GOD wills it? or does he will it because it is right? I fear this celebrated question is more curious than useful; and perhaps, in the manner in which it is usually treated of, it does not well consist with the regard that is due from a creature to the Creator and Governor of all things. Nevertheless, with awe and reverence we may speak a little.

"It seems then that the whole difficulty arises from considering God's will as distinct from God. Otherwise it vanishes away: for none can doubt but God is the cause of the law of God. But the will of God is God himself. It is God considered as willing thus and thus; consequently to say that the will of God, or that God himself is the cause of law, is one and the same thing.

"Again: if the law, the immutable rule of right and wrong, depends on the nature and fitness of things, and on their essential relations to each other: (I do not say their eternal relations, because the eternal relations of things existing in time is little less than a contradiction:) if I say this depends on the nature and relations of things, then it must depend on God, or the will of God; because those things themselves, with all their relations, are the work of his hands. By his will, *for his pleasure* alone, *they are and were created.* And yet it may be granted, which is, probably, all that a considerate person would contend for, that in every particular case God wills thus or thus, (suppose that men should honour their parents,) because it is right, agreeable to the fitness of things, to the relation in which they stand." (*Wesley.*)

All the moral und accountable creatures with which the Scriptures make us acquainted are ANGELS, DEVILS, and MEN. The first are inhabitants of heaven, and dwell in the immediate presence of God, though often employed on services to the children of men in this world. The second are represented as being in darkness and punishment as their general and collective condition, but still having access to this world by permission of God, for purposes of temptation and mischief, and as waiting for a final judgment and a heavier doom. Whether any other rational beings exist, not included in any of the above classes, dwelling in the planets and other celestial bodies, and regions of space, visible or invisible to us, and collectively forming an immensely extended and immeasurable creation, cannot be certainly determined; and all that can be said is, that the opinion is favoured by certain natural analogies between the planet we inhabit and other planetary bodies, and between our sun and planetary system and the fixed stars, which are deemed to be solar centres of other planetary systems. But were this established, there is nothing in the fact, as some have supposed, to interfere with any view which the Scriptures give us of the moral government of God, as to this world. (*See* vol. i, p. 206.) Were our race alone in the universe,

we should not be greater than we are; if, on the contrary, we are associated with countless myriads of fellow rationals in different and distinct residences, we are not thereby minified. If they are under moral government, so are we; if they are not, which no one can prove, the evidences that we are accountable creatures remain the same. If they have never fallen, the fact of our redemption cannot be affected by that; and if they need a Saviour, we may well leave the method of providing for their case or the reasons of their preterition to the wisdom of God; it is a fact which we have not before us, and on which we cannot reason. No sinister use at all can be made of the mere *probability* of the plurality of rational worlds, except to persuade us that we are so little and insignificant as to make it a vain presumption to suppose that we are the objects of Divine love. But nothing can be even more unphilosophical than the suggestion, since it supposes that, in proportion as the common Father multiplies his offspring, he must love each individual less, or be more inattentive to his interests; and because it estimates the importance of man by the existence of beings to which he has no relation, rather than by his relation to God, and his own capacity of improvement, pleasure, pain, and immortality. According to this absurd dream of infidelity, every individual in the British empire would annually lose his weight and worth in the sight of his Maker as a moral and intellectual being, because there is a great annual increase of its population.

The LAW under which all moral agents are placed, there is reason to believe, is substantially, and in its great principles, the same, and is included in this epitome, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind, and thy neighbour as thyself." For though this is spoken to men, yet, as it is founded, in both its parts, upon the natural relation of every intelligent creature to God and to all other intelligent creatures, it may be presumed to be universal. Every creature owes obedience to God its Maker, and a benevolent Creator could only seek, in the first instance, the obedience of love. Every creature must, from a revealed character of the Creator, be concluded to have been made not only to show forth his glory, but itself to enjoy happiness. Now the love of God is that affection which unites a created intelligent nature to God, the source of true happiness, and prevents, in all cases, obedience from being felt as a burden, or regarded under the cold convictions of mere duty. If, therefore, a cheerful obedience from the creature be required as that which would constantly promote by action the felicity of the agent, this law of love is to be considered as the law of all moral beings, whether of angels or of men. Its comprehensiveness is another presumption of its universality; for, unquestionably, it is a maxim of universal import, that "love is the fulfilling of the

law," since he who loves must choose to be obedient to every command issued by the sovereign, or the Father beloved; and when this love is supreme and uniform, the obedience must be absolute and unceasing. The second command is also "like unto it" in these respects—it founds itself on the natural relations which exist among the creatures of God, and it comprehends every possible relative duty. All intelligent creatures were intended to live in society. We read of no solitary rational being being placed in any part of the creation. Angels are many, and, from all the representations of Scripture, may be considered as forming one or more collective bodies. When man was created it was decided that it was not good for him to be alone, and when "a help meet for him" was provided, they were commanded to be fruitful and multiply, that the number might be increased and the earth "replenished." The very precepts which oblige us to love one another are presumptive that it was the will of God, not merely that his rational creatures should live in society and do no injury to each other, but that they should be "kindly affectionate one toward another;" a principle from which all acts of relative duty would spontaneously flow, and which would guard against all hostility, envy, and injury. Thus, by these two great first principles of the Divine law, the rational creatures of God would be united to him as their common Lord and Father, and to each other as fellow subjects and brethren. This view is farther supported by the intimations which the Scriptures afford us of the moral state of the only other intelligent class of beings beside man with which we are acquainted. Angels are constantly exhibited as loving God, jealous of his glory, and cheerfully active in the execution of his will; as benevolent toward each other, and as tenderly affected toward men. Devils, on the contrary, who are "the angels that sinned," are represented as filled with hatred and malice both toward God and every holy creature.

Indeed, if rational beings are under a law at all, it cannot be conceived that less than this could be required by the good and holy being, their Creator. They are bound to render all love, honour, and obedience to him by a natural and absolute obligation; and, as it has been demonstrated in the experience of man, any thing less would be not only contrary to the Creator's glory, but fatal to the creature's happiness.

From these views it follows, that all particular precepts, whether they relate to God or to other rational creatures, arise out of one or other of those two "great" and comprehending "commandments;" and that every particular law supposes the general one. For as in the decalogue and in the writings of the prophets are many particular precepts, though in neither are these two great commandments expressly recorded, and yet our Saviour has told us that "on these two commandments *hang* all the law and the prophets;" and the Apostle Paul, that the

precepts, "Thou shalt not commit adultery, thou shalt not kill, thou shalt not steal, thou shalt not covet, and if there be *any other commandment*, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself;" we are warranted to conclude that all moral, particular precepts presuppose those two general ones, wherever they are found, and to whomsoever they are given.

We may apply this consideration to our first parents in their primitive state. When the law of Moses was given, engraven on tables of stone by the finger of God, LAW was not *first* introduced into the world. Men were accounted righteous or wicked between the giving of the law and the flood, and before the flood, and were dealt with accordingly. Noah was "a righteous man," and the "violence and wickedness" of the antediluvian earth were the causes of its destruction by water. "Enoch walked with God;" Abel was "righteous," and Cain "wicked." Now as the moral quality of actions is determined by law, and the moral law is a revelation of the will of God; and as every punitive act on his part, and every bestowment of rewards and favours expressly on account of righteousness, suppose a regal administration; men were under a law up to the time of the fall, which law, in all its particular precepts, did, according to the reasoning of our Lord and St. Paul, given above, presuppose the two great commandments. That our first parents were under a law, is evident from the history of the transactions in the garden; but, though but one particular command, in the form of a prohibition, was given, we are not to conclude that this was the compass of their requirements, and the sole measure of their obedience. It was a particular command, which, like those in the decalogue, and in the writings of the prophets, presupposed a general law, of which this was but one manifestation. Thus are we conducted to a more ancient date of the Divine law than the solemnities of Sinai, or even the creation of man, a law coeval in its declaration with the date of rational created existence, and in its principles with God himself.—"The law of God, speaking of the manner of men, is a copy of the eternal mind, a transcript of the Divine nature; yea, it is the fairest offspring of the everlasting Father, the brightest efflux of his essential wisdom, the visible beauty of the Most High; the original idea of truth and good which were lodged in the uncreated mind from eternity." (*Wesley.*) *It is "holy, just, and good."*

Under this condition of rational existence must Adam, therefore, and every other moral agent have come into being, a condition, of course, to which he could not be a party, to which he had no right to be a party, had it been possible, but which was laid upon him; he was *made* under law, as all his descendants are born under law. (8)

(8) The covenant of works, a term much in use among divines, is one which is not in so much use as formerly; but, rightly understood, it has a good sense.

But that we may more exactly understand man's primitive state, considered morally, and the nature, extent, and consequences of his fall, it is necessary to consider briefly the history of his creation.

The manner in which this is narrated indicates something peculiar and eminent in the being to be formed. In the heavenly bodies around the earth, and among all the various productions of its surface, vegetable and animal, however perfect in their kinds, and complete, beautiful, and excellent in their respective natures, not one being was found to whom the rest could minister instruction, whom they could call forth into meditation, inspire with moral delight, or lead up to the Creator himself. There was, properly speaking, no intellectual being; none to whom *the whole*, or even any great number of the parts, of the frame and furniture of material nature could minister knowledge; no one who could employ upon them the generalizing faculty, and make them the basis of inductive knowledge. If, then, it was not wholly for himself that the world was created by God; and angels, if they, as it is indicated in Scripture, had a prior existence, were not so immediately connected with this system, that it can be supposed to have been made immediately for them; a rational inhabitant was obviously still wanting to complete the work, and to constitute a perfect whole. The formation of such a being was marked, therefore, by a manner of proceeding which serves to impress us with a sense of the greatness of the work. Not that it could be a matter of more difficulty to Omnipotence to create man than any thing beside; but principally, it is probable, because he was to be the lord of the whole, and to be, therefore, himself accountable to the original proprietor, and to exhibit the existence of another species of government, a moral administration; and to be the only creature constituted an image of the intellectual and moral perfections, and of the immortality of the common Maker. Every thing, therefore, as to man's creation is given in a solemn and deliberative form, together with an intimation of a trinity of persons in the Godhead, all *Divine*, because all equally possessed of *creative* power, and to each of whom man was to stand in relations so sacred and intimate. "And God said, Let US make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion," &c. In what, then, did this "*image*" and "*likeness*" consist?

That human nature has two essential, constituent parts is manifest from the history of Moses:—the BODY, formed out of pre-existent

The word usually translated covenant in the New Testament, more properly signifies a *dispensation* or *appointment*, which is, indeed, suited to the majesty of *law*, and even the authoritative establishment of a sole method of pardon. But in both there are parties, not to their original institution, but to their beneficent accomplishment, and in this view each may be termed a covenant.

matter, the earth; and a LIVING SOUL, breathed into the body, by an *inspiration* from God. "And the Lord God formed man out of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils (or face) the breath of life, (LIVES,) and the man became a living soul." Whatever was thus imparted to the body of man, already "*formed*," and perfectly fashioned in all its parts, was the only cause of life; and the whole tenor of Scripture shows that that was the rational spirit itself, which, by a law of its Creator, was incapable of death, even after the body had fallen under that penalty.

The "image" or likeness of God in which man was made, has, by some, been assigned to the body; by others, to the soul; others, again, have found it in the circumstance of his having "*dominion*" over the other creatures. As to the body, it is not necessary to take up any large space to prove, that in no sense can that bear the image of God, that is, be "*like*" God. Descant ever so much or ever so poetically upon man's upright and noble form, an upright form has no more likeness to God than a prone or reptile one; God is incorporeal, and has no bodily shape to be the antitype of any thing material.

This also is fatal to the notion that the image of God in man consisted in the "dominion" which was granted to him over this lower world. Limited dominion may, it is true, be an image of large and absolute dominion, but man is not said to have been made in the image of God's dominion, which is an accident merely, for, before any creatures existed, God himself could have no dominion; but in the image and likeness of God himself,—of something which constitutes *his nature*. Still farther, man, according to the history, was evidently made in the image of God, *in order* to his having dominion, as the Hebrew particle imports. He who was to have dominion, must, necessarily, be made before he could be invested with it, and, therefore, dominion was consequent to his existing in the "image" and "likeness" of God; and could not be that image itself.

The attempts which have been made to fix upon some ONE essential quality in which to place that "image" of God in which man was created, is not only uncalled for by any Scriptural reason, but is even contradicted by various parts of Scripture, from which, alone, we can derive our information on this subject. It is in vain to say that this "image" must be something *essential* to human nature, something only which cannot be lost. We shall, it is true, find that the revelation places it in what is essential to human nature; but that it should comprehend nothing else, or one quality only, has no proof or reason; and we are, in fact, taught that it comprises also what is not essential to human nature, and what may be lost and be regained. As to both, the evidence of Scripture is explicit. When God is called "the Father of spirits," a likeness is certainly intimated between man and God in the

spirituality of their nature. This is also implied in the striking argument of St. Paul with the Athenians. "Forasmuch, then, as we are the OFFSPRING of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art, and man's device," plainly referring to the idolatrous statues by which God was represented among heathens. If likeness to God in man consisted in bodily shape, this would not have been an argument against human representations of the Deity, but it imports, as Howe well expresses it, that "we are to understand that our resemblance to him, as we are his offspring, lies in some higher, more noble, and more excellent thing, of which there can be no figure, as who can tell how to give the figure or image of a thought, or of the mind or thinking power?" In spirituality, and, consequently, immateriality, this image of God in man, then, in the first existence, consists. Nor is it any valid objection to say that "immateriality is not peculiar to the soul of man, for we have reason to believe that the inferior animals of the earth are actuated by an immaterial principle." (*Gleig's Stackhouse.*) This is as certain as analogy can make it: but if we allow a spiritual principle to animals, its *kind* is obviously inferior; for the spirit which is incapable of continuous induction and moral knowledge must be of an inferior order to the spirit which possesses these capabilities; and this is the kind of spirituality which is peculiar to man.

The sentiment expressed in Wisdom ii, 23, is evidence that, in the opinion of the ancient Jews, the image of God in man comprised *immortality* also. "For God created man to be immortal, and made him to be an image of his own eternity;" and though other creatures, and even the body of man were made capable of immortality, and at least the material human frame, whatever we may think of the case of animals, would have escaped death, had not sin entered the world, yet, without running into the absurdity of the "natural immortality" of the human soul, that essence must have been constituted immortal in a high and peculiar sense, which has ever retained its prerogative of eternal duration amidst the universal death, not only of animals, but of the bodies of all human beings. To me there appears a manifest allusion to man's immortality, as being included in the image of God, in the reason which is given in Genesis for the law which inflicts death on murderers. "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in *the image of God* made he man." The essence of the crime of homicide cannot be in the putting to death the mere animal part of man; and must, therefore, lie in the peculiar value of life to an immortal being, accountable in another state for the actions done in this, and whose life ought to be specially guarded, for this very reason, that death introduces him into changeless and eternal relations, which were not to lie at the sport or mercy of human passions.

To these we are to add the *intellectual powers*, and we have what divines have called, in perfect accordance with the Scriptures, the natural image of God in his creature, which is essential and ineffaceable. He was made capable of *knowledge*, and he was endowed with liberty of *will*.

This natural image of God in which man was created, was the foundation of that MORAL IMAGE by which also he was distinguished. Unless he had been a spiritual, knowing, and willing being, he would have been wholly incapable of *moral* qualities. That he had such qualities eminently, and that in them consisted the image of God, as well as in the natural attributes just stated, we have also the express testimony of Scripture. "Lo this only have I found, that God made man UPRIGHT, but they have sought out many inventions." The objections taken to this proof are thus satisfactorily answered by President Edwards:—

"It is an observation of no weight which Dr. Taylor makes on this text, that the word *man* is commonly used to signify mankind in general, or mankind collectively taken. It is true, it often signifies the species of mankind; but then it is used to signify the species, with regard to its duration and *succession* from its beginning, as well as with regard to its *extent*. The English word *mankind* is used to signify the species: but what then? Would it be an improper way of speaking, to say, that when God first made *mankind*, he placed them in a pleasant paradise, (meaning in their first parents,) but now they live in the midst of briers and thorns? And it is certain, that to speak thus of God making mankind,—his giving the species an existence in their first parents, at the creation,—is agreeable to the Scripture use of such an expression. As in Deut. iv, 32, '*Since the day that God* CREATED MAN *upon the earth.*' Job xx, 4, '*Knowest thou not this of old, since* MAN *was placed upon the earth.*' Isaiah xlv, 12, '*I have made the earth, and* CREATED MAN *upon it: I, even my hands, have stretched out the heavens.*' Jer. xxvii, 5, '*I* HAVE MADE *the earth, the* MAN *and the beast that are upon the ground, by my great power.*' All these texts speak of God *making man*, signifying the *species* of mankind; and yet they all plainly have respect to God making man *at first*, when he '*made the earth*,' '*and stretched out the heavens.*' In all these places the same word, Adam, is used as in Ecclesiastes; and in the last of these, used with (HE *emphaticum*) *the emphatic sign*, as here; though Dr. T. omits it when he tells us he gives us a catalogue of *all* the places in Scripture where the word is used. And it argues nothing to the doctor's purpose, that the pronoun *they* is used,—'THEY *have sought out many inventions.*' This is properly applied to the species, which God made at first upright; the species begun with more than one, and continued in a multitude. As Christ speaks of the two sexes, in the relation of man and wife, continued in successive generations: Matt. xix, 4, '*He that* MADE THEM *at the beginning, made them male and female*,' having reference to Adam and Eve.

"No less impertinent, and also very unfair, is his criticism on the word (ישר) translated *upright*. Because the word sometimes signifies *right*, he would from thence infer, that it does not properly signify moral rectitude, even when used to express the character of moral agents. He might as well insist, that the English word *upright*, sometimes, and in its most original meaning, signifies *right-up*, or in an erect posture, therefore it does not properly signify any moral character, when applied to moral agents. And indeed less unreasonably; for it is known that in the *Hebrew* language, in a peculiar manner, most words used to signify moral and spiritual things, are taken from external and natural objects. The word (ישר) Jashur is used, as applied to moral agents, or to the words and actions of such, (if I have not misreckoned,) about a hundred and ten times in Scripture; and in about a hundred of them, without all dispute, to signify virtue, or moral rectitude, (though Dr. T. is pleased to say, the word does not generally signify a moral character,) and for the most part it signifies *true virtue*, or virtue in such a sense as distinguishes it from all false appearances of virtue, or what is only virtue in some respects, but not truly so in the sight of God. It is used at least eighty times in this sense: and scarce any word can be found in the *Hebrew* language more significant of this. It is thus used constantly in *Solomon's* writings, (where it is often found,) when used to express a character or property of moral agents. And it is beyond all controversy that he uses it in this place, (the seventh of Eccles.) to signify moral rectitude, or a character of real virtue and integrity. For the wise man is speaking of persons with respect to their moral character, inquiring into the corruption and depravity of mankind, (as is confessed by Dr. T.) and he here declares, he had not found one among a thousand of the right stamp, truly and thoroughly virtuous and upright; which appeared a strange thing! But in this text he clears God, and lays the blame on man: man was not made thus at first. He was made of the right stamp, altogether good in his kind, (as all other things were,) truly and thoroughly virtuous, as he ought to be; '*but they have sought out many inventions.*' Which last expression signifies things sinful, or morally evil; (as is confessed p. 185.) And this expression, used to signify those moral evils he found in man, which he sets in opposition to the uprightness man was made in, shows, that by uprightness he means the most true and sincere goodness. The word rendered *inventions*, most naturally and aptly signifies the subtle devices, and crooked deceitful ways of hypocrites, wherein they are of a character contrary to men of simplicity and godly sincerity; who, though wise in that which is good, are simple concerning evil. Thus the same wise man, in Prov. xii, 6, sets a truly good man in opposition to a man of *wicked devices*, whom God will condemn. Solomon had occasion to observe many who put on an artful disguise and fair show of goodness; but on searching thoroughly,

he found very few truly upright. As he says, Prov. xx, 6, '*Most men will proclaim every one his own goodness: but a faithful man, who can find?*' so that it is exceeding plain, that by uprightness, in this place, Eccles. vii, *Solomon* means true moral goodness." (*Original Sin.*)

There is also an express allusion to the moral image of God, in which man was at first created, in Col. iii, 10, "And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him;" and, in Eph. iv, 24, "Put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." In these passages the apostle represents the change produced in true Christians by the Gospel, as a "renewal" of the image of God in man; as a new or second creation in that image; and he explicitly declares, that that image consists in "knowledge," in "righteousness," and in "true holiness." The import of these terms shall be just now considered; but it is here sufficient that they contain the doctrine of a creation of man in the image of the moral perfections of his Maker.

This also may be finally argued from the satisfaction with which the historian of the creation represents the Creator as viewing the works of his hands as "*very good.*" This is pronounced with reference to each individually, as well as to the whole. "And God saw *every thing* that he had made, and behold it was very good." But, as to man, this goodness must necessarily imply moral as well as physical qualities. Without them he would have been imperfect as *man;* and had they existed in him, in their first exercises, perverted and sinful, he must have been an exception, and could not have been pronounced "very good." The goodness of man, as a rational being, must lie in a devotedness and consecration to God; consequently, man was at first devoted to God, otherwise he was not good. A rational creature, as such, is capable of knowing, loving, serving, and living in communion with the Most Holy One. Adam, at first, did, or did not use this capacity; if he did not, he was not *very good*, nor good at all.

As to the degree of moral perfection in the first man, much scope has been given, in describing it, to a warm imagination, and to much rhetorical embellishment; and Adam's perfection has sometimes been placed at an elevation which renders it exceedingly difficult to conceive how he should fall into sin at all; and especially how he should fall so soon as seems to be represented in the narrative of Moses. On the other hand, those who either deny or hold very slightly the doctrine of our hereditary depravity, delight to represent Adam as little, if at all, superior in moral perfection and capability to his descendants. But, if we attend to the passages of Holy Writ above quoted, we shall be able, on this subject, to ascertain, if not the exact degree of his moral endowments, yet that there is a certain standard below which he could not be placed, in the perfection of his moral endowments. Generally, he was made in the

image of God which we have already proved is to be understood *morally* as well as *naturally*. Now, however the image of any thing may be reduced in extent, it must still be an accurate representation as far as it goes. Every thing good in the creation must always be a miniature representation of the excellence of the Creator; but, in this case, the "goodness," that is, the perfection of every creature, according to the part it was designed to act in the general assemblage of beings collected into our system, wholly forbids us to suppose that the image of God's moral perfections in man was a blurred and dim representation. To whatever *extent* it went, it necessarily excluded all that from man which did not resemble God; it was a likeness to God in "righteousness and true holiness," whatever the degree of each might be, which excluded all admixture of unrighteousness and unholiness. The first part of our conclusion, therefore, is, that man, in his original state, was *sinless*, both in act and in *principle*. "God made man UPRIGHT." That this signifies moral rectitude has been already established; but the import of the word is very extensive. It expresses, by an easy figure, the *exactness* of truth, justice, and obedience; and it comprehends the state and habit both of the heart and the life. Such, then, was the state of primitive man; there was no obliquity of his moral principles, his mind and affections; none in his conduct. He was perfectly sincere and exactly just, rendering from the heart all that was due to God and to the creature. Tried by the exactest *plummet*, he was *upright;* by the most perfect *rule*, he was *straight*.

The "*knowledge*" in which the Apostle Paul, in the passage quoted above from Colos. iii, 10, places "the image of God" after which man was created, does not merely imply the faculty of the understanding, which is a part of the natural image of God; but that which might be lost, because it is that in which the new man is "*renewed*." It is, therefore, to be understood of the faculty of knowledge in the right exercise of its original power; and of that willing reception, and firm retaining, and hearty approval of religious truth, in which knowledge, when spoken of morally, is always understood in the Scriptures. We may not be disposed to allow, with some, that he understood the deep philosophy of nature, and could comprehend and explain the sublime mysteries of religion. The circumstance of his giving names to the animals is certainly no sufficient proof of his having attained to a philosophical acquaintance with their qualities and distinguishing habits, though we should allow the names to be still retained in the Hebrew, and to be as expressive of their peculiarities as some expositors have stated. No sufficient time appears to have been afforded him for the study of their properties, as this event took place previous to the formation of Eve; and as for the notion of his acquiring knowledge by intuition, it is contradicted by the *revealed* fact, that angels themselves acquire their

knowledge by observation and study, though, no doubt, with greater rapidity and certainty than we. The whole of the transaction was supernatural; the beasts were "brought" to Adam, and it is probable that he named them under a Divine impulse. He has been supposed to be the inventor of language, but the history shows that he was never without language. He was from the first able to converse with God; and we may, therefore, infer that language was in him a supernatural and miraculous endowment. That his understanding was, as to its capacity, deep and large beyond any of his posterity, must follow from the perfection in which he was created, and his acquisitions of knowledge would, therefore, be rapid and easy. It was, however, in moral and religious truth, as being of the first concern to him, that we are to suppose the excellency of his knowledge to have consisted. "His reason would be clear, his judgment uncorrupted, and his conscience upright and sensible." (*Watts.*) The best knowledge would, in him, be placed first, and that of every other kind be made subservient to it, according to its relation to that. The apostle adds to knowledge, "righteousness and true holiness," terms which express not merely freedom from sin, but positive and active virtues.

"A rational creature thus made, must not only be innocent and free, but must be formed holy. His will must have an inward bias to virtue: he must have an inclination to please that God who made him; a supreme love to his Creator, a zeal to serve him, and a tender fear of offending him.

"For either the new created man loved God supremely or not. If he did not he was not innocent, since the law of nature requires a supreme love to God. If he did he stood ready for every act of obedience: and this is *true holiness of heart.* And, indeed, without this, how could a God of holiness love the work of his own hands?

"There must be also in this creature a regular subjection of the inferior powers to the superior sense, and appetite and passion must be subject to reason. The mind must have a power to govern these lower faculties, that he might not offend against the law of his creation.

"He must also have his heart inlaid with love to the creatures, especially those of his own species, if he should be placed among them: and with a principle of honesty and truth in dealing with them. And if many of those creatures were made at once, there would be no pride, malice, or envy, no falsehood, no brawls or contentions among them, but all harmony and love." (*Dr. Watts.*)

Sober as these views are of man's primitive state, it is not, perhaps, possible for us fully to conceive of so exalted a condition as even this. Below this standard it could not fall; and that it implied a glory, and dignity, and moral greatness of a very exalted kind, is made sufficiently apparent from the degree of guilt charged upon Adam when he fell, for

the aggravating circumstances of his offence may well be deduced from the tremendous consequences which followed.

The creation of man in the moral image of God being so clearly stated in the Scriptures, it would be difficult to conceive in what manner their testimony, in this point, could be evaded, did we not know the readiness with which some minds form objections, and how little ingenuity is required to make objections plausible. The objection to this clearly revealed truth is thus stated by Dr. Taylor, of Norwich, and it has been followed in substance, and with only some variation of phrase, by the Socinians of the present day. "Adam could not be originally created in righteousness and true holiness; because habits of holiness cannot be created without our knowledge, concurrence, or consent; for holiness in its nature implies the choice and consent of a moral agent, without which it cannot be holiness." If, however, it has been established that God made man *upright;* that he was created in "knowledge," "righteousness," and "true holiness;" and that at his creation he was pronounced *very good;* all this falls to the ground, and is the vain reasoning of man against the explicit testimony of God. The fallacy is, however, easily detected. It lies in confounding "*habits* of holiness" with the principle of holiness. Now though habit is the result of acts, and acts of voluntary choice; yet if the choice be a right one, and right it must be in order to an act of holiness, and if this right choice, frequently exerted, produces so many acts as shall form what is called a habit, then either the principle from which that right choice arises must be good or bad, or neither. If neither, a right choice has no cause at all; if bad, a right choice could not originate from it; if good, then there may be a holy principle in man, a right nature before choice, and so that part of the argument falls to the ground. Now, in Adam, that rectitude of principle from which a right choice and right acts flowed, was either created with him or formed by his own volitions. If the latter be affirmed, then he must have willed right before he had a principle of rectitude, which is absurd; if the former, then his creation in a state of moral rectitude, with an aptitude and disposition to good is established.

Mr. Wesley thus answers the objection:—"What is holiness? Is it not essentially love? The love of God and of all mankind? Love producing 'bowels of mercies,' humbleness of mind, meekness, gentleness, long suffering? And *cannot* God shed abroad this love in any soul, without his concurrence? Antecedent to his knowledge or consent? And supposing this to be done, will love change its nature? Will it be no longer holiness? This argument can never be sustained; unless you would play with the word *habits*. Love is holiness wherever it exists. And God *could* create either men or angels, endued from the very first moment of their existence, with whatsoever degree of love he pleased.

"You 'think, on the contrary, it is demonstration, that we cannot be righteous or holy, we cannot *observe* what is right without our own free and explicit choice.' I suppose you mean *practise* what is right. But a man may be righteous before he *does* what is right, holy in heart before he is holy in life. The confounding these two all along, seems the ground of your strange imagination, that Adam 'must choose to be righteous, must exercise thought and reflection before he could be righteous.' Why so? 'Because righteousness is the right use and application of our powers.' Here is your capital mistake. No, it is not: it is the right *state* of our powers. It is the *right disposition* of our *soul*, the right *temper* of our *mind*. Take this with you, and you will no more dream, that 'God could not create man in righteousness and true holiness.'" (*Original Sin.*)

President Edwards's answer is:—

"I think it a contradiction to the nature of things as judged of by the common sense of mankind. It is agreeable to the sense of men, in all nations and ages, not only that the fruit or effect of a good choice is virtuous, but that the good choice itself, from whence that effect proceeds, is so; yea, also the antecedent food, disposition, temper, or affection of mind, from whence proceeds that *good* choice is virtuous. This is the general notion—not that principles derive their goodness from actions, but—that actions derive their goodness from the principles whence they proceed; so that the act of choosing what is good, is no farther virtuous than it proceeds from a good principle or virtuous disposition of mind. Which supposes that a virtuous disposition of mind may be before a virtuous act of choice; and that, therefore, it is not necessary there should first be thought, reflection, and choice, before there can be any virtuous disposition. If the choice be first, before the existence of a good disposition of heart, what is the character of that choice? There can, according to our natural notions, be no virtue in a choice which proceeds from no virtuous principle, but from mere self love, ambition, or some animal appetites; therefore, a virtuous temper of mind may be before a good act of choice, as a tree may be before the fruit, and the fountain before the stream which proceeds from it." (*Original Sin.*)

The *final cause* of man's creation was the display of the glory of God, and principally of his moral perfections. Among these, benevolence shone with eminent lustre. The creation of rational and holy creatures was the only means, as it appears to us, of accomplishing that most paternal and benevolent design, to impart to other beings a portion of the Divine felicity. The happiness of God is the result of his moral perfection, and it is complete and perfect. It is also specific; it is the felicity of knowledge, of conscious rectitude, of sufficiency, and independence. Of the two former, creatures were capable; but only

rational creatures. Matter, however formed, is unconscious, and is, and must for ever remain, incapable of happiness. However disposed and adorned, it was made for another, and not at all with reference to itself. If it be curiously wrought, it is for some other's wonder; if it has use, it is for another's convenience; if it has beauty, it is for another's eye; if harmony, it is for another's ear. Irrational animate creatures may derive advantage from mere matter; but it does not appear that they are conscious of it. They have the enjoyment of sense, but not the powers of reflection, comparison, and taste. They see without admiration, they combine nothing into relations. So to know, as to be conscious of knowing, and to feel the pleasures of knowledge; so to know, as to impart knowledge to others; so to know, as to lay the basis of future and enlarging knowledge, as to discover the efficient and the final causes of things; and to enjoy the pleasures of discovery and certainty of imagination and taste,—this is peculiar to rational beings. Above all, to know the great Creator and Lord of all; to see the distinctions of right and wrong, of good and evil in his law; to have, therefore, the consciousness of integrity and of well ordered and perfectly balanced passions; to feel the felicity of universal and unbounded benevolence; to be conscious of the favour of God himself; to have perfect confidence in his care and constant benediction; to adore him; to be grateful; to exert hope without limit on future and unceasing blessings; all these sources of felicity were added to the pleasures of intellect and imagination in the creation of rational beings. In whatever part of the universe they were created and placed, we have sufficient reason to believe that this was the primitive condition of all; and we know, assuredly, from God's own revelation, that it was the condition of man. In his creation and primeval condition, the "kindness and love of God" eminently appeared. He was made a rational and immortal spirit, with no limits to the constant enlargement of his powers; for, from all the evidence that our own consciousness, even in our fallen state, affords us, it appears possible to the human soul to be eternally approaching the infinite in intellectual strength and attainment. He was made holy and happy; he was admitted to intercourse with God. He was not left alone, but had the pleasure of society. He was placed in a world of grandeur, harmony, beauty, and utility; it was canopied with other distant worlds to exhibit to his very sense a manifestation of the extent of space and the vastness of the varied universe; and to call both his reason, his fancy, and his devotion, into their most vigorous and salutary exercises. He was placed in a paradise, where, probably, all that was sublime and gentle in the scenery of the whole earth was exhibited in *pattern*; and all that could delight the innocent sense, and excite the curious inquiries of the mind, was spread before him. He had labour to employ his attention, without wearying him; and time for his highest pursuits of

knowing God, his will, and his works. All was a manifestation of universal love, of which he was the chief visible object; and the felicity and glory of his condition must, by his and their obedience in succession, have descended to his posterity for ever. Such was our world, and its rational inhabitants, the first pair; and thus did its creation manifest not only the power and wisdom, but the benevolence of Deity. He made them like himself, and he made them capable of a happiness like his own.

The case of man is now so obviously different, that the change cannot be denied. The Scriptural method of accounting for this is the disobedience of our first parents; and the visitation of their sin upon their posterity, in the altered condition of the material world, in the corrupt moral state in which men are born, and in that afflictive condition which is universally imposed upon them. The testimony of the sacred writings to what is called, in theological language, THE FALL OF MAN, (9) is, therefore, to be next considered.

The Mosaic account of this event is, that a garden having been planted by the Creator, for the use of man, he was placed in it, "to dress it, and to keep it;" that in this garden two trees were specially distinguished, one as "the tree of life," the other as "the tree of the knowledge of good and evil;" that, from eating of the latter Adam was restrained by positive interdict, and by the penalty, "in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die:" that the serpent, who was more subtle than any beast of the field, tempted the woman to eat, by denying that death would be the consequence, and by assuring her, that her eyes and her husband's eyes "would be opened," and that they would "be as gods, knowing good and evil:" that the woman took of the fruit, gave of it to her husband, who also ate; that for this act of disobedience they were expelled from the garden, made subject to death, and laid under other maledictions.

That this history should be the subject of much criticism, not only by infidels, whose objections to it have been noticed in the first part of this work; but by those who hold false and perverted views of the Christian system, was to be expected. Taken in its natural and obvious sense, along with the comments of the subsequent scriptures, it teaches the doctrines of the existence of an evil, tempting, invisible spirit, going about seeking whom he may deceive and devour; of the introduction of a state of moral corruptness into human nature, which has been transmitted to all men; and of a vicarious atonement for sin: and wherever the fundamental truths of the Christian system are denied, attempts will be made so to interpret this part of the Mosaic history as to obscure

(9) This phrase does not occur in the canonical Scriptures; but is, probably, taken from Wisdom x, 1, "She preserved the first formed father of the world that was created, and brought him out of his *fall*."

the testimony which it gives to them, either explicitly, or by just induction. Interpreters of this account of the lapse of the first pair, and the origin of evil, as to the human race, have adopted various and often strange theories; but those whose opinions it seems necessary to notice may be divided into those who deny the literal sense of the relation entirely; those who take the account to be in part literal and in part allegorical; and those who, while they contend earnestly for the literal interpretation of every part of the history, consider some of the terms used, and some of the persons introduced, as conveying a meaning more extensive than the letter, and as constituting several symbols of spiritual things and of spiritual beings.

Those who have denied the literal sense entirely, and regard the whole relation as an instructive *mythos*, or fable, have, as might be expected, when all restraint of authority was thus thrown off from the imagination, adopted very different interpretations. Thus we have been taught, that this account was intended to teach the evil of yielding to the violence of appetite and to its control over reason; or the introduction of vice in conjunction with knowledge and the artificial refinements of society; or the necessity of keeping the great mass of mankind from acquiring too great a degree of knowledge, as being hurtful to society; or as another version of the story of the golden age, and its being succeeded by times more vicious and miserable; or as designed, enigmatically, to account for the origin of evil, or of mankind. This catalogue of opinions might be much enlarged: some of them have been held by mere visionaries; others by men of learning, especially by several of the semi-infidel theologians and Biblical critics of Germany; and our own country has not been exempt from this class of *free* expositors. How to fix upon the moral of "the fable" is, however, the difficulty; and this variety of opinion is a sufficient refutation of the general notion assumed by the whole class, since scarcely can two of them be found who adopt the same interpretation, after they have discarded the literal acceptation.

But that the account of Moses is to be taken as a matter of real history, and according to its literal import, is established by two considerations, against which, as being *facts*, nothing can successfully be urged. The first is, that the account of the fall of the first pair is a part of a *continuous* history. The creation of the world, of man, of woman; the planting of the garden of Eden, and the placing of man there; the duties and prohibitions laid upon him; his disobedience; his expulsion from the garden; the subsequent birth of his children, their lives and actions, and those of their posterity, down to the flood; and, from that event, to the life of Abraham, are given in the same plain and unadorned narrative, brief, but yet simple, and with no intimation at all, either from the elevation of the style or otherwise, that a fable or allegory is in any

part introduced. If this, then, be the case, and the evidence of it lies upon the very face of the history, it is clear, that if the account of the fall be excerpted from the whole narrative as allegorical, any subsequent part, from Abel to Noah, from Noah to Abraham, from Abraham to Moses, may be excerpted for the same reason, which is neither more nor less than this, that it does not agree with the theological opinions of the interpreter; and thus the whole of the Pentateuch may be rejected as a history, and converted into fable. One of these consequences must, therefore, follow, either that the account of the fall must be taken as history, or the historical character of the whole five books of Moses must be unsettled; and if none but infidels will go to the latter consequence, then no one who admits the Pentateuch to be a true history generally, can consistently refuse to admit the story of the fall of the first pair to be a narrative of real events, because it is written in the same style, and presents the same character of a continuous record of events. So conclusive has this argument been felt, that the anti-literal interpreters have endeavoured to evade it, by asserting that the part of the history of Moses in question bears marks of being a separate fragment, more ancient than the Pentateuch itself, and transcribed into it by Moses, the author and compiler of the whole. This point is examined and satisfactorily refuted in the learned and excellent work referred to below; (1) but it is easy to show, that it would amount to nothing, if granted, in the mind of any who is satisfied on the previous question of the inspiration of the Holy Scriptures. For let it be admitted that Moses, in writing the Pentateuchal history, availed himself of the traditions of the patriarchal ages, a supposition not in the least inconsistent with his inspiration or with the absolute truth of his history, since the traditions so introduced have been authenticated by the Holy Spirit; or let it be supposed, which is wholly gratuitous, that he made use of previously existing documents; and that some differences of style in his books may be traced, which serve to point out his quotations, which also is an assumption, or rather a position, which some of the best Hebraists have denied, yet two things are to be noted: first, that the inspired character of the books of Moses is authenticated by our Lord and his apostles, so that they must necessarily be wholly true, and free from real contradictions; and, secondly, that to make it any thing to their purpose who contend that the account of the fall is an older document, introduced by Moses, it ought to be shown that it is not written as truly in the *narrative* style, even if it could be proved to be in some respects a different style, as that which precedes and follows it. Now the very literal character of our translation will enable even the

(1) Holden's Dissertation on the Fall of Man, chap. ii. In this volume the literal sense of the Mosaic account of the fall is largely investigated and ably established.

unlearned reader to discover this. Whether it be an embodied tradition or the insertion of a more ancient document, (though there is no foundation at all for the latter supposition,) it is obviously a *narrative*, and a narrative as simple as any which precedes or follows it.

The other indisputable fact to which I just now adverted, as establishing the literal sense of the history, is that, *as such*, it is referred to and reasoned upon in various parts of Scripture.

Job xx, 4, 5, "Knowest thou not this of old, since man was placed upon earth, that the triumphing of the wicked is short, and the joy of the hypocrite but for a moment?" The first part of the quotation "might as well have been rendered, 'since ADAM was placed on the earth.' There is no reason to doubt but that this passage refers to the fall and the first sin of man. The date agrees, for the knowledge here taught is said to arise from facts as old as the first placing of man upon earth, and the sudden punishment of the iniquity corresponds to the Mosaic account,—'the triumphing of the wicked is short, his joy but for a moment.'" (*Sherlock on Prophecy.*)

Job xxxi, 33, "If I covered my transgression as ADAM, by hiding my iniquity in my bosom." Magee renders the verse,—

> "Did I cover, like Adam, my transgression,
> By hiding in a lurking place mine iniquity?"

and adds, "I agree with Peters, that this contains a reference to the history of the first man, and his endeavours to hide himself after his transgression." (*Discourses on the Atonement.*) Our margin reads, "after the manner of men;" and also the old versions; but the Chaldee paraphrase agrees with our translation, which is also satisfactorily defended by numerous critics.

Job xv, 14, "What is man, that he should be clean; and he which is born of a woman, that he should be righteous?" Why not clean? Did God make woman or man unclean at the beginning? If he did, the expostulation would have been more apposite, and much stronger, had the true cause been assigned, and Job had said, "How canst thou expect cleanness in man, whom thou *createdst* unclean?" But, as the case now stands, the expostulation has a plain reference to the introduction of vanity and corruption by the sin of the woman, and is an evidence that this ancient writer was sensible of the evil consequences of the fall upon the whole race of man. "Eden" and "the garden of the Lord" are also frequently referred to in the prophets. We have the "tree of life" mentioned several times in the Proverbs and in the Revelation. "God," says Solomon, "made man upright." The enemies of Christ and his Church are spoken of, both in the Old and New Testaments, under the names of "the serpent," and "the dragon;" and the habit of the serpent to lick the dust is also referred to by Isaiah.

If the history of the fall, as recorded by Moses, were an allegory, or any thing but a literal history, several of the above allusions would have no meaning; but the matter is put beyond all possible doubt in the New Testament, unless the same culpable liberties be taken with the interpretation of the words of our Lord and of St. Paul as with those of the Jewish lawgiver. Our Lord says, Matt. xix, 4, 5, "Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning, made them male and female; and said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and they twain shall be one flesh?" This is an argument on the subject of divorces, and its foundation rests upon two of the facts recorded by Moses. 1. That God made at first but two human beings, from whom all the rest have sprung. 2. That the intimacy and indissolubility of the marriage relation rests upon the formation of the woman from the man; for our Lord quotes the words in Genesis, where the obligation of man to cleave to his wife is immediately connected with that circumstance. "And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man. THEREFORE shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife; and they shall be one flesh." This is sufficiently in proof that both our Lord and the Pharisees considered this early part of the history of Moses as a narrative; for, otherwise, it would neither have been a reason, on his part, for the doctrine which he was inculcating, nor have had any force of conviction as to them. "In Adam," says the Apostle Paul, "all die;" "by one man sin entered into the world." "But I fear lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ." In the last passage, the instrument of the temptation is said to be a serpent, (οφις,) which is a sufficient answer to those who would make it any other animal; and Eve is represented as being first seduced, according to the account in Genesis. This St. Paul repeats, in 1 Tim. ii, 13, 14, "Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, (first, or immediately,) but the woman being deceived was in the transgression." And offers this as the reason of his injunction, "Let the woman learn in silence, with all subjection." When, therefore, it is considered, that these passages are introduced, not for rhetorical illustration, or in the way of classical quotation, but are made the basis of grave and important reasonings, which embody some of the most important doctrines of the Christian revelation; and of important social duties and points of Christian order and decorum; it would be to charge the writers of the New Testament with the grossest absurdity, with even culpable and unworthy trifling, to suppose them to argue from the history of the fall, as a narrative, when they knew it to be an allegory; and if we are, therefore, compelled to allow that it was understood as a real history by our Lord

and his inspired apostles, those speculations of modern critics, which convert it into a parable, stand branded with their true character of infidel and semi-infidel temerity.

The objections which are made to the historical character of this account are either those of open unbelievers and scoffers; or such as are founded precisely upon the same allegations of supposed absurdity and unsuitableness to which such persons resort, and which suppose that man is a competent judge of the proceedings of his Maker, and that the latter ought to regulate his conduct and requirements by what the former may think fit or unfit. If the literal interpretation of the first chapter in Genesis could be proved inconsistent with other parts of Holy Writ, then, indeed, we should be compelled to adopt the mode of explanation by allegory; but if no reason more weighty can be offered for so violent a proceeding, than that men either object to the doctrines which the literal account includes; or that the recorded account of the actual dealings of God with the first man, does not comport with their notions of what was fit in such circumstances, we should hold truth with little tenacity, were we to surrender it to the enemy upon such a summons. The fallacy of most of these objections is, however, easily pointed out. We are asked, first, whether it is reasonable to suppose, that the fruit of the tree of life could confer immortality? But what is there irrational in supposing that, though Adam was made exempt from death, yet that the fruit of a tree should be the appointed instrument of preserving his health, repairing the wastes of his animal nature, and of maintaining him in perpetual youth? Almighty God could have accomplished this end without means, or by other means; but since he so often employs instruments, it is not more strange that he should ordain to preserve Adam permanently from death by food of a special quality, than that now he should preserve men in health and life, for three-score years and ten, by specific foods; and that, to counteract disorders, he should have given specific medicinal qualities to herbs and minerals: or if, with some, we regard the eating of the tree of life as a sacramental act, an expression of faith in the promise of continued preservation, and a means through which the conserving influence of God was bestowed, a notion, however, not so well founded as the other, it is yet not inconsistent with the literal interpretation, and involves no really unreasonable consequence, and nothing directly contrary to the analogy of faith. It has been, also, foolishly enough asked whether the fruit of the prohibited tree, or of any tree, can be supposed to have communicated "knowledge of good and evil," or have had any effect at all upon the intellectual powers? But this is not the idea conveyed by the history, however literally taken, and the objection is groundless. That tree might surely, without the least approach to allegory, be called "the tree of the knowledge of good and evil," whether we understand by this, that by eating it man came to

know, by sad experience, the value of the "good" he had forfeited, and the bitterness of "evil," which he had before known only in name; or, as others have understood it, that it was appointed to be the test of Adam's fidelity to his Creator, and, consequently, was a tree of the knowledge of good and evil, a tree for the purpose of knowing (or making known) whether he would cleave to the former, or make choice of the latter. The first of these interpretations is, I think, to be preferred, because it better harmonizes with the whole history; but either of them is consistent with a literal interpretation, and cannot be proved to involve any real absurdity.

To the account of the serpent, it has been objected that, taken literally, it makes the invisible tempter assume the body of an animal to carry on his designs; but we must be better acquainted with the nature and laws of disembodied spirits before we can prove this to be impossible, or even unlikely; and as for an animal being chosen as the means of approach to Eve, without exciting suspicion, it is manifest that, allowing a superior spirit to be the real tempter, it was good policy in him to address Eve through an animal which she must have noticed as one of the inhabitants of the garden, rather than in a human form, when she knew that herself and her husband were the only human beings as yet in existence. The presence of such a stranger would have been much more likely to put her on her guard. But then, we are told that the animal was a contemptible reptile. Certainly not before he was degraded in form; but, on the contrary, one of the "beasts of the earth," and not a "creeping thing;" and also more "subtle," more discerning and sagacious "than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made"—consequently the head of all the inferior animals in intellect, and not unlikely to have been of a corresponding noble and beautiful form; for this, indeed, his bodily degradation imports. (2) If there was policy, then, in Satan's choosing an animal as the instrument by which he might make his approaches, there was as much good taste in his selection as the allegorists, who seem anxious on this point, can wish for him. The *speaking* of the serpent is another stumbling-block; but as the argument is not here with an infidel, but with those who profess to receive the Mosaic record as Divine, the speaking of the serpent is no more a reason for interpreting the relation allegorically, than the speaking of the ass of Balaam can be for allegorizing the whole of that transaction. That a good or an evil spirit has no power to produce articulate sounds

(2) We have no reason at all to suppose, as it is strangely done almost uniformly by commentators, that this animal had the serpentine form in any mode or degree at all before his transformation. That he was then degraded to a reptile, to go "upon his belly," imports, on the contrary, an entire alteration and loss of the original form—a form of which it is clear no idea can now be conceived.

from the organs of an animal, no philosophy can prove, and it is a fact which is, therefore, capable of being rationally substantiated by testimony. There is a clear reason, too, for this use of the power of Satan in the story itself. By his giving speech to the serpent, and representing *that*, as appears from the account, as a consequence of the serpent having himself eaten of the fruit, (3) he took the most effectual means of impressing Eve with the dangerous and fatal notion, that the prohibition of the tree of knowledge was a restraint upon her happiness and intellectual improvement, and thus to suggest hard thoughts of her Maker. The objection that Eve manifested no *surprise* when she heard an animal speak, whom she must have known not to have had that faculty before, has also no weight, since that circumstance might have occurred without being mentioned in so brief a history. It is still more likely that Adam should have expressed some marks of surprise and anxiety too, when his wife presented the fruit to him, though nothing of the kind is mentioned. But allowing that no surprise was indicated by the woman, the answer of the author just quoted is satisfactory.

"In such a state, reason must enjoy a calm dominion; and consequently there was no room for those sudden starts of imagination, or those sudden tumults, agitations, failures, and stagnations of the blood and spirits now incident to human nature; and therefore Eve was incapable of fear or surprise from such accidents as would disquiet the best of her posterity. This objection then is so far from prejudicing the truth of the Mosaic history, that to me I own it a strong presumption in its favour.

"But after all, if this objection has any weight with any one, let him consider what there is in this philosophic serenity of our first parent, supposing the whole of her conduct on this occasion fully related to us, so far exceeding the serenity of Fabricius, upon the sudden appearance and cry of the elephant contrived by Pyrrhus to discompose him; or the steadiness of Brutus upon the appearance of his evil genius; and yet I believe Plutarch no way suffers in his credit as a historian by the rela-

(3) "'And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food,' &c. Now Eve could plainly know, by her senses, that the fruit was desirable to the eye, but it was impossible she could know that it was good for food, but from the example and experiment of the serpent. It was also impossible she could know that it was desirable to make use of it, but by the example of the serpent, whom she saw from a brute become a rational and vocal creature, as she thought by eating that fruit. The text says she saw it was good for food, and that it was desirable to make wise, and seeing does not imply conjecture or belief, but certain knowledge; knowledge founded upon evidence and proof; such proof as she had then before her eyes. And when once we are sure that she had this proof, as it is evident she had, the whole conference between her and the serpent is as rational and intelligible as any thing in the whole Scriptures." (DELANY'S *Dissertations*.)

tion of those events; at least had he related those surprising accidents without saying one word of what effects they had upon the passions of the persons concerned, his relations had certainly been liable to no imputation of incredibility or improbability upon that account." (*Revelation Examined.*)

An objection is taken to the *justice* of the sentence pronounced on the serpent, if the transaction be accounted real, and if that animal were but the unconscious instrument of the great seducer. To this the reply is obvious, that it could be no matter of just complaint to the serpent that its form should be changed, and its species lowered in the scale of being. It had no original right to its former superior rank, but held it at the pleasure of the Creator. If special pain and sufferings had been inflicted upon the serpent, there would have been a semblance of plausibility in the objection; but the serpent suffered, as to liability to pain and death, no more than other animals, and was not therefore any more than another irrational creature, accounted a responsible offender. Its degradation was evidently intended as a memento to man, and the real punishment, as we shall show, fell upon the real transgressor who used the serpent as his instrument; while the enmity of the whole race of serpents to the human race, their cunning, and their poisonous qualities, appear to have been wisely and graciously intended as standing warnings to us to beware of that great spiritual enemy, who ever lies in wait to wound and to destroy.

These are the principal objections made to the literal interpretation of this portion of the Mosaic record, and we have seen that they are either of no weight in themselves, or that they cannot be entertained without leading to a total disregard of other parts of the inspired Scriptures. Tradition, too, comes in to the support of the literal sense, and on such a question has great weight. The Apocryphal writings afford a satisfactory testimony of the sentiments of the Jews. 2 Esdras iii, 4–7, "O Lord, thou barest rule, thou spakest at the beginning, when thou didst plant the earth, and that thyself alone, and commandest the people; and gavest a body to Adam without soul, which was the workmanship of thy hands, and didst breathe into him the breath of life, and he was made living before thee; and thou leddest him into paradise, which thy right hand had planted, and unto him thou gavest commandment to love thy way, which he transgressed, and immediately thou appointedst death in him and in his generations, of whom came nations, tribes, people, and kindreds out of number." 2 Esdras vii, 48, "O thou Adam, what hast thou done? for though it was thou that sinned, thou art not fallen alone, but we are all that came of thee." Wisdom ii, 24, "Nevertheless, through envy of the devil came death into the world." Wisdom x, 1, "She (wisdom) preserved the first-formed father of the world, that was created alone, and brought him out of his fall."

Ecclesiasticus xvii, 1, &c, "The Lord created man of the earth, and turned him into it again. He gave them a few days and a short time, and also power over all things therein—he filled them with the knowledge of understanding, and showed them good and evil." By these ancient Jewish writers it is, therefore, certain, that the account of the fall was understood as the narrative of a real transaction; and, except on this assumption, it is impossible to account for those traditions which are embodied in the mythology of almost all pagan nations. Of these fables the basis must have been some fact, real or supposed; for as well might we expect the fables of Æsop to have impressed themselves on the religious ceremonies and belief of nations, as the Mosaic fable of man's fall; for a mere fable it must be accounted, if it is to lose its literal interpretation.

Popular convictions every where prevailed of the existence of some beings of the higher order, who had revolted from their subjection to the heavenly power which presided over the universe; and upon them were raised many fabulous stories. It is probable, that these convictions were originally founded on the circumstances referred to in Scripture with respect to Satan and his angels, as powerful malevolent beings, who, having first seduced Adam from his obedience, incessantly laboured to deceive, corrupt, and destroy his descendants. The notion of the magi of Plutarch, and of the Manicheans, concerning two independent principles, acting in opposition to each other, was also founded on the real circumstances of the apostasy of angels, and of their interference and influence in the affairs of men. The fictions of Indian mythology with regard to contending powers, and their subordinate ministers, benevolent and malignant, were erected on the same basis of truth; and the Grecian and Roman accounts of the battles of the giants against Jupiter, were, perhaps, built on the corruptions of tradition on this point.

"The original temptation, by which Satan drew our first parents from their duty, and led them to transgress the only prohibition which God had imposed, is described in the first pages of Scripture; and it is repeated, under much disguise, in many fables of classical mythology.

"Origen considers the allegorical relations furnished by Plato, with respect to Porus tempted by Penia to sin when intoxicated in the garden of Jove, as a disfigured history of the fall of man in paradise. It seems to have been blended with the story of Lot and his daughters. Plato might have acquired in Egypt the knowledge of the original circumstances of the fall, and have produced them, under the veil of allegory, that he might not offend the Greeks by a direct extract from the Jewish Scriptures. The heathen notions with respect to the Elysian fields, the garden of Adonis, and that of Hesperides, in which the fruit was

watched by a serpent, were probably borrowed from the sacred accounts, or from traditional reports with respect to paradise.

"The worship established toward the evil spirit by his contrivance, sometimes under the very appearance in which he seduced our first parents, is to be found among the Phenicians and Egyptians. The general notion of the serpent as a mysterious symbol annexed to the heathen deities; and the invocation of Eve in the Bacchanalian orgies, (with the production of a serpent, consecrated as an emblem, to public view,) seems to bear some relation to the history of the first temptation, which introduced sin and death into the world. The account of discord being cast out from heaven, referred to by Agamemnon, in the nineteenth book of Homer's Iliad, has been thought to be a corrupt tradition of the fall of the evil angels. Claudian shows an acquaintance with the circumstances of the seduction of man, and of an ejection from paradise, and his description seems to have furnished subjects of imitation to Milton.

"It has been imagined that the Indians entertained some notions, founded on traditionary accounts, of paradise: and the representations of the serpent under the female form, and styled the Mexican Eve, are said to be found in the symbolical paintings of Mexico.

"The original perfection of man, the corruption of human nature resulting from the fall, and the increasing depravity which proceeded with augmented violence from generation to generation, are to be found in various parts of profane literature. Chryalus, the Pythagorean, declared that man was made in the image of God. Cicero (as well as Ovid) speaks of man as created erect, as if God excited him to look up to his former relation and ancient abode. The loss of his resemblance to God was supposed to have resulted from disobedience, and was considered as so universal, that it was generally admitted, as it is expressed by Horace, that no man was born without vices. The conviction of a gradual deterioration from age to age—of a change from a golden period, by successive transitions, to an iron depravity—of a lapse from a state devoid of guilt and fear, to times filled with iniquity, was universally entertained.

"Descriptions to this effect are to be found in the writings of almost all the poets, and they are confirmed by the reports of philosophers and historians. Providence seems to have drawn evidence of the guilt of men from their own confessions, and to have preserved their testimonies for the conviction of subsequent times." (*Gray's Connection.*)

In the Gothic mythology, which seems to have been derived from the east, THOR is represented as the first born of the supreme God, and is styled in the Edda *the eldest of sons.* He was esteemed a middle divinity, a mediator between God and man. With respect to his actions, he is said to have wrestled with death, and, in the struggle, to have been

brought upon one knee; to have *bruised the head* of the serpent with his mace; and, in his final engagement with that monster, to have beat him to the earth and slain him. This victory, however, is not obtained but at the expense of his own life;—"Recoiling back nine steps, he falls dead upon the spot, suffocated with the floods of venom which the serpent vomits forth upon him." Much the same notion, we are informed, is prevalent in the mythology of the Hindoos.—"Two sculptured figures are yet extant in one of their oldest pagodas, the former of which represents *Creeshna*, an incarnation of their mediatorial god *Veeshnu*, trampling on the *crushed head* of the serpent; while in the latter it is seen encircling the deity in its folds, and biting his heel." An engraving of this curious sculpture is given in Moore's Hindu Pantheon.

As to those who would interpret the account, the literal meaning of which we have endeavoured to establish, partly literally, and partly allegorically, a satisfactory answer is given in the following observations of Bishop Horsley:—

"No writer of true history would mix plain matter of fact with allegory in one continued narrative, without any intimation of a transition from one to the other. If, therefore, any part of this narrative be matter of fact, no part is allegorical. On the other hand, if any part be allegorical, no part is naked matter of fact: and the consequence of this will be, that every thing in every part of the whole narrative must be allegorical. If the formation of the woman out of the man be allegory, the woman must be an allegorical woman. The man therefore must be an allegorical man; for of such a man only the allegorical woman will be a meet companion. If the man is allegorical, his paradise will be an allegorical garden; the trees that grow in it, allegorical trees; the rivers that watered it, allegorical rivers; and thus we may ascend to the very beginning of the creation; and conclude at last, that the heavens are allegorical heavens, and the earth an allegorical earth. Thus the whole history of the creation will be an allegory, of which the real subject is not disclosed; and in this absurdity the scheme of allegorizing ends." (*Horsley's Sermons.*)

But though the literal sense of the history is thus established, yet that it has in several parts, but in perfect accordance with the literal interpretation, a mystical and higher sense than the letter, is equally to be proved from the Scriptures; and, though some writers, who have maintained the literal interpretation inviolate, have run into unauthorized fancies in their interpretation of the mystical sense, that is no reason why we ought not to go to the full length to which the light of the Scriptures, an infallible comment upon themselves, will conduct us. It is, as we have seen, matter of established history, that our first parents were prohibited from the tree of knowledge, and, after their fall,

were excluded from the tree of life; that they were tempted by a serpent; and that various maledictions were passed upon them, and upon the instrument of their seduction. But, rightly to understand this history, it is necessary to recollect—that man was in a state of trial;—that the prohibition of a certain fruit was but one part of the law under which he was placed;—that the serpent was but the instrument of the real tempter; and that the curse pronounced on the instrument was symbolical of the punishment reserved for the agent.

The first of these particulars appears on the face of the history, and to a state of trial the power of moral freedom was essential. This is a subject on which we shall have occasion to speak more at large in the sequel; but, that the power of choosing good and evil was vested with our first parents is as apparent from the account as that they were placed under rule and restraint. In vain were they commanded to obey, if obedience were impossible; in vain placed under prohibition, if they had no power to resist temptation. Both would, indeed, have been unworthy the Divine legislator; and if this be allowed, then their moral freedom must also be conceded. They are contemplated throughout the whole transaction, not as instruments, but as actors, and as such, capable of reward and punishment. Commands are issued to them; which supposes a power of obedience, either original and permanent in themselves, or derived, by the use of means, from God, and, therefore, attainable; and however the question may be darkened by metaphysical subtleties, the power to obey necessarily implied the power to refuse and rebel. The promised continuance of their happiness, which is to be viewed in the light of a reward, implies the one; the actual infliction of punishment as certainly includes the other.

The power of obeying and the power of disobeying being then mutually involved, that which determines to the one or to the other, is the will. For, if it were some power, *ab extra*, operating necessarily, man would no longer be an *actor*, but be reduced to the mere condition of a *patient*, the mere instrument of another. This does not, however, shut out solicitation and strong influence from without, provided it be allowed to be resistible, either by man's own strength, or by strength from a higher source, to which he may have access, and by which he may fortify himself. But as no absolute control can be externally exerted over man's actions, and he remain accountable; and, on the other hand, as his actions are in fact controllable in a manner consistent with his free agency, we must look for this power in his own mind; and the only faculty which he possesses, to which any such property can be attributed, is called, for that very reason, and because of that very quality, his will or choice; a power by which, in that state of completeness and excellence in which Adam was created, he must be supposed to be able to command his thoughts, his desires.

his words, and his conduct, however excited, with an absolute sovereignty. (4)

This faculty of willing, indeed, appears essential to a rational being, in whatever rank he may be placed. "Every rational being," says Dr. Jenkins, very justly, (*Reasonableness of Christian Religion,*) "must naturally have a liberty of choice, that is, it must have a *will* to choose as well as an *understanding* to reason; because, a faculty of understanding, if left to itself without a will to determine it, must always think of the same objects, or proceed in a continued series and connection of thoughts, without any end or design, which would be labour in vain, and tedious thoughtfulness to no purpose." But, though *will* be essential to rational existence, and freedom of will to a creature placed in a state of trial, yet the degree of external influence upon its determinations, through whatever means it may operate, may be very different both in kind and degree; which is only saying, in other words, that the circumstances of trial may be varied, and made more easy or more difficult and dangerous, at the pleasure of the great Governor and Lord of all. Some who have written on this subject, seem to have carried their views of the circumstances of the paradisiacal probation too high; others have not placed them high enough. The first have represented our first parents to have been so exclusively intellectual and devotional, as to be almost out of the reach of temptation from sense and passion; others, as approximating too nearly to their mortal and corrupt descendants. This, however, is plain, from the Scriptures, the guide we ought scrupulously to follow, that they were subject to temptation, or solicitation of the will, from *intellectual pride*, from *sense*, and from *passion*.—The two first operated on Eve, and probably also on Adam; to which was added, in him, a passionate subjection to the wishes of his wife. (5) If, then, these are the facts of their temptation, the circumstances of their trial are apparent. "The soul of man," observes Stillingfleet, (*Origines Sacræ,*) "is seated in the middle, as it were, between those more excellent beings which live perpetually above, with which it partakes in the sublimity of its nature and understanding; and those inferior terrestrial beings with which it communicates through the vital union which it has with the body, and that by reason of its natural freedom, it is sometimes assimilated to the one and sometimes to the other of these extremes. We must observe, farther, that, in this com-

(4) "Impulsus etsi vehemens valde atque potens esset, voluntatis tamen imperio atque arbitrio semper egressus ejus in actum subjiciebatur. Poterat enim voluntas, divinæ voluntatis consideratione armata, resistere illi, eumque in ordinem ista vi redigere; alioquin enim frustanea fuisset legislatio, qua affectus circumscribebatur et refrænabatur." (*Episcopius, Disputatio* ix.)

(5) "Accessit in Adamo specialis quidam conjugis propriæ amor, quo adductus ad gratiani illius, affectui suo proclivius indulsit, et tentationi sathanæ facilius cessit auremque præbuit." (*Episcopius, Disputatio* ix.)

pound nature of ours, there are several powers and faculties, several passions and affections, differing in their nature and tendency, according as they result from the soul or body; that each of these has its proper object, in a due application to which it is easy and satisfied; that they are none of them sinful in themselves, but may be instruments of much good, when rightly applied, as well as occasion great mischief by a misapplication: whereupon a considerable part of virtue will consist in regulating them, and in keeping our *sensitive* part subject to the rational. This is the original constitution of our nature; and, since the first man was endowed with the powers and faculties of the mind, and had the same dispositions and inclinations of body, it cannot be but that he must have been liable to the same sort of temptations, and consequently, capable of complying with the dictates of sense and appetite, contrary to the direction of reason and the conviction of his own mind: and to this cause the Scripture seems to ascribe the commission of the first sin, when it tells us, that *the woman saw the tree, that it was good for food, and pleasant to the eye, and desirable to make one wise, i. e.* it had several qualities that were adapted to her natural appetites; was beautiful to the sight, and delightful to the taste, and improving to the understanding, which both answered the desire of knowledge implanted in her spiritual, and the love of sensual pleasure, resulting from her *animal* part; and these, heightened by the suggestions of the tempter, abated the horror of God's prohibition, and induced her to act contrary to his express command."

It is, therefore, manifest, that the state of trial in which our first parents were placed was one which required, in order to the preservation of virtue, vigilance, prayer, resistance, and the active exercise of the dominion of the will over solicitation. No creature can be absolutely perfect because it is finite; and it would appear, from the example of our first parents, that an innocent, and, in its *kind*, a perfect rational being, is kept from falling only by "taking hold" on God; and as this is an act, there must be a determination of the will to it, and so when the least carelessness, the least tampering with the desire of forbidden gratifications is induced, there is always an enemy at hand to make use of the opportunity to darken the judgment and to accelerate the progress of evil. Thus "when desire is conceived, it bringeth forth sin, and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." This is the only account we can obtain of the origin of evil, and it resolves itself into three principles:—1. The necessary finiteness, and, therefore, imperfection in *degree* of created natures. 2. The liberty of choice, which is essential to rational, accountable beings. 3. The influence of temptation on the will. That Adam was so endowed as to have resisted the temptation, is a sufficient proof of the *justice* of his Maker throughout this transaction; that his circumstances of trial were made

precisely what they were, is to be resolved into a *wisdom*, the full manifestation of which is, probably, left to another state, and will, doubtless, there have its full declaration.

The following acute observations of Bishop Butler may assist us to conceive how possible it is for a perfectly innocent being to fall under the power of evil, whenever a vigilant and resisting habit is not perfectly and absolutely persevered in :—"This seems distinctly conceivable, from the very nature of particular affections and propensions. For, suppose creatures intended for such a particular state of life, for which such propensions were necessary: suppose them endowed with such propensions, together with moral understanding, as well including a practical sense of virtue, as a speculative perception of it; and that all these several principles, both natural and moral, forming an inward constitution of mind, were in the most exact proportion possible, *i. e.* in a proportion the most exactly adapted to their intended state of life: such creatures would be made upright, or finitely perfect. Now particular propensions, from their very nature, must be felt, the objects of them being present; though they cannot be gratified at all, or not with the allowance of the moral principle. But, if they can be gratified without its allowance, or by contradicting it; then they must be conceived to have some tendency, in how low a degree soever, yet some tendency, to induce persons to such forbidden gratifications. This tendency, in some one particular propension, may be increased by the greater frequency of occasions naturally exciting it, than of occasions exciting others. The least voluntary indulgence in forbidden circumstances, though but in thought, will increase this wrong tendency; and may increase it farther, till, peculiar conjunctions perhaps conspiring, it becomes effect; and danger from deviating from right, ends in actual deviation from it; a danger necessarily arising from the very nature of propension; and which, therefore, could not have been prevented, though it might have been escaped, or got innocently through. The case would be, as if we were to suppose a straight path marked out for a person, in which such a degree of attention would keep him steady: but if he would not attend in this degree, any one of a thousand objects, catching his eye, might lead him out of it. Now it is impossible to say, how much even the first full overt act of irregularity might disorder the constitution; unsettle the adjustments, and alter the proportions, which formed it, and in which the uprightness of its make consisted: but repetition of irregularities would produce habits, and thus the constitution would be spoiled, and creatures made upright, become corrupt, and depraved in their settled character, proportionably to their repeated irregularities in occasional acts." (*Analogy.*)

These observations are general, and are introduced only to illustrate the point, that we may conceive of a creature being made innocent, and

yet still dependent upon the exercise of caution for its preservation from moral corruption and offence. It was not, in fact, by the slow and almost imperceptible formation of evil habits, described in the extract just given, by which Adam fell; that is but one way in which we may conceive it possible for sin to enter a holy soul. He was exposed to the wiles of a tempter, and his fall was sudden. But this exposure to a particular danger was only a circumstance in his condition of probation. It was a varied mode of subjecting the will to solicitation; but no necessity of yielding was laid upon man in consequence of this circumstance. From the history we learn that the devil used not force but persuasion, which involves no necessity; and that the devil cannot force men to sin is sufficiently plain from this, that, such is his malevolence, that if he could render sin inevitable, he would not resort to persuasion and the sophistry of error to accomplish an end more directly within his reach. (6)

The prohibition under which our first parents were placed has been the *subject* of many "a fool-born jest," and the threatened punishment has been argued to be disproportioned to the offence. Such objections are easily dissipated. We have already seen, that all rational creatures are under a law which requires supreme love to God and entire obedience to his commands; and that, consequently, our first parents were placed under this equitable obligation. We have also seen that all specific laws emanate from this general law; that they are manifestations of it, and always suppose it. The decalogue was such a manifestation of it to the Jews, and the prohibition of the tree of knowledge is to be considered in the same light. Certainly this restraint presupposed a right in God to command, a duty in the creatures to obey; and the particular precept was but the exercise of that previous right which was vested in him, and the enforcement of that previous obligation upon them. To suppose it to be the only rule under which our first parents were placed would be absurd; for then it would follow, that if they had become sensual in the use of any other food than that of the prohibited tree; or if they had refused worship and honour to God, their Creator; or if they had become "hateful, and hating one another," these would not have been sins. This precept was, however, made prominent by special injunction; and it is enough to say that it was, as the event showed, a sufficient test of their obedience.

The objection that it was a *positive*, and not a *moral* precept, deserves to be for a moment considered. The difference between the two is, that "moral precepts are those the reasons of which we see; positive precepts those, the reasons of which we do not see. Moral duties arise

(6) "Diabolus causa talis statui non potest; gina ille suasione sola usus legitur: suasio autem necessitatem nullam affert, sed moraliter tantum voluntatem ad se allicere atque attractiere conatur." (*Episcopius.*)

out of the nature of the case itself, prior to external command: positive duties do not arise out of the nature of the case, but from external command; nor would they be duties at all, were it not for such command received from him whose creatures and subjects we are." (*Butler's Analogy.*) It has, however, been justly observed that, since positive precepts have somewhat of a moral nature, we may see the reasons of them considered in this view, and, so far as we discern the reasons of both, moral and positive precepts are alike. In the case in question no just objection, certainly, can be made against the making a positive precept the special test of the obedience of our first parents. In point of obligation, positive precepts rest upon the same ground as moral ones, namely, the will of God. Granting, even, that we see no reason for them, this does not alter the case; we are bound to obey our Creator, both as matter of right and matter of gratitude; and the very essence of sin consists in resisting the will of God. Even the reason of moral precepts, their fitness, suitableness, and influence upon society, do not constitute them absolutely obligatory upon us. The obligation rests upon their being made *law* by the authority of God. Their fitness, &c, may be the reasons why he has made them parts of his law; but it is the promulgation of his will which makes the law and brings us under obligation. In this respect, then, moral and positive laws are of equal authority when enjoined with equal explicitness. To see or not to see the reasons of the Divine enactments, whether moral or positive, is a circumstance which affects not the question of duty. There is, nevertheless, a distinction to be made between *positive* precepts and *arbitrary* ones, which have no reason but the will of him who enacts them, though, were such enjoined by almighty God, our obligation to obey would be absolute. It is, however, proper to suppose, that when the reasons of positive precepts are not seen by us, they do, in reality, exist in those relations, and qualities, and habitudes of things which are only known to God; for, that he has a sufficient reason for all that he requires of us, is a conclusion as rational as it is pious; and to slight *positive* precepts, therefore, is in fact to refuse obedience to the Lawgiver only on the proud and presumptuous ground, that he has not made us acquainted with his own reasons for enacting them. Nor is the institution of such precepts without an obvious general moral reason, though the reason for the injunction of particular positive injunctions should not be explained. Humility, which is the root of all virtue, may, in some circumstances, be more effectually promoted when we are required to obey under the authority of God, than when we are prompted also by the conviction of the fitness and excellence of his commands. It is true, that when the observance of a moral command and a positive precept come into such opposition to one another that both cannot be observed, we have examples in Scripture which authorize us to prefer the former to the

latter, as when our Lord healed on the Sabbath day, and justified his disciples for plucking the ears of corn when they were hungry; yet, in point of fact, the rigidness which forbade the doing good on the Sabbath day, in these cases of necessity, we have our Lord's authority to say, was the result of a misinterpretation of the moral precept itself, and no direct infringement of it was implied in either case. Should an actual impossibility occur of observing two precepts, one a moral and the other a positive one, it can be but a rare case, and our conduct must certainly be regulated, not on our own views merely, but on such general principles as our now perfect revelation furnishes us with, and it is at our risk that we misapply them. In the case of our first parents, the positive command neither did, nor, apparently in their circumstances, could stand in opposition to any moral injunction contained in that universal law under which they were placed. It harmonized perfectly with its two great principles, love to God and love to our neighbour, for both would be violated by disobedience;—one, by rebellion against the Creator; the other, by disregard of each other's welfare, and that of their posterity.

Nor, indeed, was this positive injunction without some obvious moral reason, the case with probably all positive precepts of Divine authority, when carefully considered. The ordinances of public worship, baptism in the name of Christ, the celebration of the Lord's Supper, and the observance of the Sabbath, have numerous and very plain reasons both of subjection, recognition, and gratitude; and so had the prohibition of the fruit of one of the trees of the garden. The moral precepts of the decalogue would, for the most part, have been inappropriate to the peculiar condition of the first pair;—such as the prohibitions of polytheism; of the use of idolatrous images; of taking the name of God in vain; of theft and adultery; of murder and covetousness. Thus even if objectors were left at liberty to attempt to point out a better test of obedience than that which was actually appointed, they would find, as in most such cases, how much easier it is to object than to suggest. The law was, in the first place, simple and explicit; it was not difficult of observation; and it accorded with the circumstances of those on whom it was enjoined. They were placed amidst abundance of pleasant and exhilarating fruits, and of those one kind only was reserved. This reservation implied also great principles. It may be turned into ridicule:—so, by an ignorant person, might the reserve in our customs of a pepper corn, or other quit rent, which yet are acknowledgments of subjection and sovereignty. This is given as an illustration, not, indeed, as a parallel; for there is a very natural view of this transaction in paradise, which gives to it an aspect so noble and dignified, that we may well shudder at the impiety of that poor wit by which it has been sometimes ignorantly assailed. The dominion of

this lower world had been given to man, but it is equally required by the Divine glory, and by the benefit of creatures themselves, that all should acknowledge their subjection to him. Man was required to do this, as it were, openly, and in the presence of the whole creation, by a public token, and to give proof of it by a continued abstinence from the prohibited fruit. He was required to do it also in a way suitable to his excellent nature and to his character as lord of all other creatures, by a free and voluntary obedience, thus acknowledging the common Creator to be his supreme Lord, and himself to be dependent upon his bounty and favour. In this view we can conceive nothing more fitting, as a test of obedience, and nothing more important than the moral lesson continually taught by the obligation thus openly and publicly to acknowledge the rights and authority of him who was, naturally, the Lord of all. (7)

The immediate, visible agent in the seduction of man to sin was the serpent; but the whole testimony of Scripture is in proof that the real tempter was that subtle and powerful evil spirit, whose general appellatives are the DEVIL and SATAN. (8) This shows that ridicule, as to the serpent, is quite misplaced, and that one of the most serious doctrines is involved in the whole account,—the doctrine of diabolical influence. We have already observed, that we have no means of ascertaining the pristine form and qualities of this animal, except that it was distinguished from all the beasts of the field, which the Lord God had made, by his "subtlety" or intelligence, for the word does not necessarily imply a bad sense; and we might, indeed, be content to give credit to Satan for a wily choice of the most fitting instrument for his purpose. These are questions which, however, sink into nothing before the important doctrine of the liability of man, both in his primitive and in his fallen state, to temptations marshalled and directed by a superior, malignant intelligence. Of this, the fact cannot be doubted, if we admit the Scriptures to be interpreted by any rules which will admit them to be written for explicit instruction and the use of popular readers; and, although we have but general intimations of the existence of an order of apostate spirits, and know nothing of the date of their creation, or the circumstances of their probation and fall; yet this is clear, that they are permitted, for their "time," to have influence on earth; to war against the virtue and the peace of man, though under constant control and govern-

(7) "Legem tamen hanc idcirco homini latam fuisse arbitramur, ut ei obsequendo et obtemperando, palam publiceque veluti testaretur, se, cui dominium rerum omnium creatarum à Deo delatum erat, Deo tamen ipsi subjectum obnoxiumque esse; utque obsequio eodem suo tanquam vasallus et cliens, publico aliquo recognitionis symbolo, profiteretur, se in omnibus Deo suo, tanquam supremo Domino, obtemperare et parere velle; id quod æquissimum erat." (*Episcopius.*)

(8) The former word signifies a *traducer* and *false accuser*, the latter an *adversary*.

ment; and that this entered into the circumstances of the trial of our first parents, and that it enters into ours. In this part of the history of the fall, therefore, without giving up any portion of the literal sense, we must, on the authority of other passages of Scripture, look beyond the letter, and regard the serpent but as the *instrument* of a super-human tempter, who then commenced his first act of warfare against the rule of God in this lower world; and began a contest, which, for purposes of wisdom, to be hereafter more fully disclosed, he has been allowed to carry on for ages, and will still be permitted to maintain till the result shall make his fall more marked, and bring into view moral truths and principles in which the whole universe of innocent or redeemed creatures are, probably, to be instructed to their eternal advantage.

In like manner, the malediction pronounced upon the serpent, while it is to be understood literally as to that animal, must be considered as teaching more than the letter simply expresses; and the terms of it are, therefore, for the reason given above, (the comment found in other parts of Scripture,) to be regarded as symbolical. "As the literal sense does not exclude the mystical, the cursing of the serpent is a symbol to us, and a visible pledge of the malediction with which the devil is struck by God, and whereby he is become the most abominable and miserable of all creatures. But man, by the help of *the seed of the woman*, that is, by our Saviour, shall bruise his head, wound him in the place that is most mortal, and destroy him with eternal ruin. In the meantime, the enmity and abhorrence we have of the serpent is a continual warning to us of the danger we are in of the devil, and how heartily we ought to abhor him and all his works." (*Archbishop King.*) To this view, indeed, strenuous objections have been made; and in order to get quit of the doctrine of so early and significant a promise of a Redeemer,—a promise so expressed as necessarily to imply redemption through the temporary suffering of the Redeemer, the *bruising of his heel*,—many of those who are willing to give up the latter entirely, in other parts of the narrative, and to resolve the whole into fable, resist this addition of the parabolical meaning to the literal, and contend for that alone. In answer to this, we may observe,—

1. That, on the merely literal interpretation of these words, the main instrument of the transgression would remain unsentenced and unpunished. That instrument was the devil, as already shown, and who, in evident allusion to this circumstance, is called in Scripture, "a murderer from the beginning," "a *liar* and the father of lies;" "that *old* serpent, called the devil and Satan, which *deceiveth* the whole world;" he "who sinneth from the *beginning*;" so that whosoever "committeth sin is of the devil," and consequently our first parents. It is also in plain allusion to this history and the bruising of the head of the serpent that the apostle takes the phrase of "bruising" Satan under the feet of believers.

These passages can only be disposed of by resolving the whole account of diabolical agency in Scripture into figures of speech; (the theory adopted by Socinians, and which will be subsequently refuted;) but if the agency of Satan be allowed in this transaction, then to confine ourselves to the *merely* literal sense leaves the prime mover of the offence without any share of the malediction; and the curse of the serpent must, therefore, in justice, be concluded to fall with the least weight upon the animal instrument, the serpent itself, and with its highest emphasis upon the intelligent and accountable seducer.

2. We are compelled to this interpretation by the reason of the case. That a higher power was identified with the serpent in the transaction, is apparent, from the intelligent and rational powers ascribed to the serpent, which it is utterly inconsistent with the distinction between man and the inferior animals to attribute to a mere brute. He was the most "subtle" of the beasts, made such near approaches to rationality as to be a *fit instrument* by which to deceive; but, assuredly, the use of speech, of reasoning powers, a knowledge of the Divine law, and the power of seductive artifice to entrap human beings in their state of perfection into sin against God, are not the faculties of an irrational animal. The solemn manner, too, in which the Almighty addresses the serpent in pronouncing the curse, shows that an intelligent and free agent was arraigned before him, and it would, indeed, be ridiculous to suppose to the contrary.

3. The circumstances of our first parents also confirm the symbolical interpretation, in conjunction with the literal one. This is shown by Bishop Sherlock with much acuteness:—

"They were now in a state of sin, standing before God to receive sentence for their disobedience, and had reason to expect a full execution of the penalty threatened. *In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.* But God came in mercy as well as judgment, purposing not only to punish, but to restore man. The judgment is awful and severe: the woman is doomed to sorrow in conception; the man to sorrow and travail all the days of his life; the ground is cursed for his sake; and the end of the judgment is, *dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return.* Had they been left thus, they might have continued in their labour and sorrow for their appointed time, and at last have returned to dust, without any well-grounded hope or confidence in God: they must have looked upon themselves as rejected by their Maker, delivered up to trouble and sorrow in this world, and as having no hope in any other. Upon this ground I conceive there could have been no religion left in the world; for a sense of religion without hope is a state of phrenzy and distraction, void of all inducements to love and obedience, or any thing else that is praiseworthy. If, therefore, God intended to preserve them as objects of mercy, it was absolutely necessary to communicate so

much hope to them, as might be *a rational foundation* for their future endeavours to be reconciled to him. This seems to be the *primary* intention of this first Divine prophecy; and it was necessary to the state of the world, and the condition of religion, which could not possibly have been supported without the communication of such hopes. The prophecy is excellently adapted to this purpose, and manifestly conveyed such hopes to our first parents. For let us consider in what sense we may suppose them to understand the prophecy. Now they must necessarily understand the prophecy, either according to the literal meaning of the words, or according to such meaning as the whole circumstance of the transaction, of which they are part, does require. If we suppose them to understand the words literally only, and that God meant them to be so understood, this passage must appear ridiculous. Do but imagine that you see God coming to judge the offenders; *Adam* and *Eve* before him in the utmost distress; that you hear God inflicting pains, and sorrows, and misery, and death, upon the first of human race; and that in the midst of all this scene of wo and great calamity, you hear him foretelling, with great solemnity, a very trivial accident that should sometimes happen in the world: that serpents would be apt to bite men by the heels, and that men would be apt to revenge themselves by striking them on the head. What has this trifle to do with the loss of mankind, with the *corruption* of the *natural* and *moral* world, and the ruin of all the glory and happiness of the creation? Great comfort it was to Adam, doubtless, after telling him that his days would be short and full of misery, and his end without hope, to let him know that he should now and then knock a snake on the head, but not even that, without paying dear for his poor victory, for the snake should often bite him by the heel. Adam surely could not understand the prophecy in this sense, though some of his sons have so understood it. Leaving this, therefore, as absolutely absurd and ridiculous, let us consider what meaning the circumstances of the transaction do necessarily fix to the words of this prophecy. Adam tempted by his wife, and she by the serpent, had fallen from their obedience, and were now in the presence of God expecting judgment. They knew full well at this juncture, that their *fall* was the *victory* of the *serpent*, whom by experience they found to be an enemy to God and to man; to man, whom he had ruined by seducing him to sin; to God, the noblest work of whose creation he had defaced. It could not, therefore, but be some comfort to them to hear the serpent first condemned, and to see that, however he had prevailed against them, he had gained no victory over their Maker, who was able to assert his own honour, and to punish this great author of iniquity. By this method of God's proceeding they were secured from thinking that there was any evil being equal to the Creator in power and dominion: an opinion which gained ground in after times through the prevalence of evil, and is, where it does pre-

vail, destructive of all true religion. The belief of God's supreme dominion, which is the foundation of all religion, being thus preserved, it was still necessary to give them such hopes as they could not but conceive, when they heard from the mouth of God, that the serpent's victory was not a complete victory, over even themselves; that they and their posterity should be enabled to contest his empire; and though they were to suffer much in the struggle, yet finally they should prevail and bruise the serpent's head, and be delivered from his power and dominion over them. What now could they conceive this conquest over the serpent to mean? Is it not natural to expect that we shall recover that by victory which we lost by being defeated? They knew that the enemy had subdued them by sin, could they then conceive hopes of victory otherwise than by righteousness? They lost through sin the happiness of their creation, could they expect less from the return of righteousness than the recovery of the blessings forfeited? What else but this could they expect? For the certain knowledge they had of their loss when the serpent prevailed, could not but lead them to a clear knowledge of what they should regain by prevailing against the serpent. The language of this prophecy is indeed in part metaphorical, but it is a great mistake to think that all metaphors are of uncertain signification; for the design and scope of the speaker, with the circumstances attending, create a final and determinate sense."

The import of this prediction appears, from various allusions of Scripture, to have been, that the Messiah, who was, in an eminent and peculiar sense, the *seed of the woman*, should, though himself *bruised* in the conflict, obtain a complete victory over the malice and power of Satan, and so restore those benefits to man which by sin he had lost. From this time hope looked forward to the GREAT RESTORER, and sacrifices, which are no otherwise to be accounted for, began to be offered, in prefiguration of the fact and efficacy of his sufferings. From that first promise, that light of salvation broke forth, which, by the increased illumination of revelation, through following ages, shone brighter and brighter to the perfect day. To what extent our first parents understood this promise it is not possible for us to say. Sufficiently, there is no doubt, for hope and faith; and that it might be the ground of a new dispensation of religion, in which salvation was to be of grace, not of works, and in which prayer was to be offered for all necessary blessings, on the ground of pure mercy, and through the intercession of an infinitely worthy Mediator. The Scriptures cannot be explained, unless this be admitted, for these are the very principles which are assumed in God's government of man from the period of his fall; and it is, therefore, probable, that in those earliest patriarchal ages, of which we have so brief and rapid an account in the writings of Moses, and which we may, nevertheless, collect, were ages distinguished by the frequent and

visible intercourse of God and superior beings with men, there were revelations made and instructions given which are not specifically recorded, but which formed that body of theology which is, unquestionably, *presupposed* by the whole Mosaic institute. But if we allow that this first promise, as interpreted by us, contains more than our first parents can be supposed to have discovered in it, we may say, with the prelate just quoted, "Since this prophecy has been plainly fulfilled in Christ, and by the event appropriated to him only, I would fain know how it comes to be conceived to be so ridiculous a thing in us to suppose that God, to whom the whole event was known from the beginning, should make choice of such expressions as naturally conveyed so much knowledge to our first parents as he intended, and yet should appear, in the fulness of time, to have been peculiarly adapted to the event which he, from the beginning, saw, and which he intended the world should one day see, and which, when they should see, they might the more easily acknowledge to be the work of his hand, by the secret evidence which he had enclosed from the days of old in the words of prophecy."

From these remarks on the history of the fall, we are called to consider the state into which that event reduced the first man and his posterity.

As to Adam, it is clear that he became liable to inevitable *death*, and that, during his temporary life, he was doomed to severe labour, expressed in Scripture by eating his bread in, or "by the sweat of his brow." These are incontrovertible points; but that the threatening of death, as the penalty of disobedience, included spiritual and eternal death, as to himself and his posterity, has been, and continues to be, largely and resolutely debated, and will require our consideration.

On this subject the following are the leading opinions :—

The view stated by Pelagius, who lived in the fifth century, is (if he has not been misrepresented) that which is held by the modern Socinians. It is, that though Adam, by his transgression, exposed himself to the displeasure of his Maker, yet that neither were the powers of his own nature at all impaired, nor have his posterity, in any sense, sustained the smallest hurt by his disobedience; that he was created mortal, and would, therefore, have died, had he not sinned; and that the only evil he suffered was his being expelled from paradise, and subjected to the discipline of labour. That his posterity, like himself, are placed in a state of trial; that death to them, as to him, is a natural event; and that the prospect of certain dissolution, joined to the common calamities of life, is favourable to the cultivation of virtue. By a proper attention we may maintain our innocence amidst surrounding temptations, and may also daily improve in moral excellence, by the proper use of reason and other natural powers.

A second opinion has been attributed to the followers of Arminius,

on which a remark shall just now be offered. It has been thus epitomized by Dr. Hill:—

"According to this opinion, although the first man had a body naturally frail and mortal, his life would have been for ever preserved by the bounty of his Creator, had he continued obedient; and the instrument employed by God, to preserve his mortal body from decay, was the fruit of life. Death was declared to be the penalty of transgression; and, therefore, as soon as he transgressed, he was removed at a distance from the tree of life; and his posterity, inheriting his natural mortality, and not having access to the tree of life, are subjected to death. It is therefore said by St. Paul, 'By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men. In Adam all die. By one man's offence death reigned by one.' These expressions clearly point out death to be the consequence of Adam's transgression, an evil brought upon his posterity by his fault; and this the Arminians understand to be the whole meaning of its being said, 'Adam begat a son in his own likeness, after his image,' Gen. v, 3, and of Paul saying, 'We have borne the image of the earthly.'

"It is admitted, however, by those who hold the opinion, that this change upon the condition of mankind, from a life preserved without end, to mortality, was most unfavourable to their moral character. The fear of death enfeebles and enslaves the mind; the pursuit of those things which are necessary to support a frail perishing life, engrosses and contracts the soul; and the desires of sensual pleasure are rendered more eager and ungovernable, by the knowledge that the time of enjoying them soon passes away. Hence arise envying of those who have a larger share of the good things of this life—strife with those who interfere in our enjoyments—impatience under restraint—and sorrow and repining when pleasure is abridged. And to this variety of turbulent passions, the natural fruits of the punishment of Adam's transgression, there are also to be added, all the fretfulness and disquietude occasioned by the diseases and pains which are inseparable from the condition of a mortal being. In this way the Arminians explain such expressions as these, 'by one man's disobedience many were made sinners;' 'all are under sin;' 'behold I was shapen in iniquity,' *i. e.* all men, in consequence of Adam's sin, are born in these circumstances,—under that disposition of events which subjects them to the dominion of passion, and exposes them to so many temptations, that it is impossible for any man to maintain his integrity. And hence, they say, arises the necessity of a Saviour, who, restoring to man the immortality which he had forfeited, may be said to have abolished death; who effectually delivers his followers from that bondage of mind, and that corruption of character, which are connected with the fear of death; who, by his perfect obedience, obtains pardon for those sins into which they have

been betrayed by their condition; and by his Spirit enables them to overcome the temptations which human nature of itself cannot withstand.

"According to this opinion, then, the human race has suffered universally in a very high degree by the sin of their first parent. At the same time, the manner of their suffering is analogous to many circumstances in the ordinary dispensations of Providence; for we often see children, by the negligence or fault of their parents, placed in situations very unfavourable both to their prosperity and to their improvement; and we can trace the profligacy of their character to the defects of their education, to the example set before them in their youth, and to the multiplied temptations in which, from a want of due attention on the part of others, they find themselves early entangled." (*Lectures.*)

That this is a very defective view of the effects of the original offence upon Adam and his descendants must be acknowledged. Whether Adam, as to his body, became mortal by positive *infliction*, or by being excluded from the means of warding off disease and mortality, which were provided in the tree of life, is a speculative point, which has no important theological bearing; but that the corruption of our nature, and not merely its greater liability to be corrupted, is the doctrine of Scripture, will presently be shown. This [semi-Pelagian sentiment] was not the opinion of Arminius, nor of his immediate followers. Nor is it the opinion of that large body of Christians, often called Arminians, who follow the theological opinions of Mr. Wesley. It was the opinion of Dr. Whitby and several divines of the English Church, who, though called Arminians, were semi-Pelagians, or at least made great approaches to that error; and the writer just quoted has no authority for giving this as the Arminian opinion, except the work of Whitby's, entitled, *Tractatus de Imputatione Peccati Adami.* In this, however, he has followed others, who, on Whitby's authority, attribute this notion not only to Arminius singly, but to the body of the remonstrants, and to all those who, to this day, advocate the doctrine of general redemption. This is one proof how little pains many divines of the Calvinistic school have taken to understand the opinions they have hastily condemned in mass.

The following passages from the writings of Arminius will do justice to the character of that eminent divine on this important subject.

In the 15th and 16th propositions of his 7th public lecture *on the first sin of the first man*, he says,—

"The immediate and proper effect of this sin was, that God was offended by it. For since the form of sin is the transgression of the law, 1 John iii, 4, such transgression primarily and immediately impinges against the Legislator himself, Gen. iii, 2; and it impinges against him, Gen. iii, 16, 19, 23, 24, with offence, it having been his will that his law should not be infringed, Gen. iii, 17: from which he conceives a just wrath, which is the second effect of sin. But this wrath is followed

by the infliction of punishment, which here is twofold: 1. A liability to both deaths, Rom. vi, 23. 2. A privation of that primeval holiness and righteousness, Luke xix, 26, which, because they were the effects of the Holy Spirit dwelling in man, ought not to remain in man who had fallen from the favour of God, and had incurred his anger. For that Spirit is a seal and token of the Divine favour and benevolence. Rom. viii, 14, 15; 1 Cor. ii, 12.

"But the whole of this sin is not peculiar to our first parents, but is common to the whole race, and to all their posterity, who, at the time when the first sin was committed, were in their loins, and who afterward descended from them in the natural mode of propagation, according to the primitive benediction. For, in Adam all have sinned, Rom. v, 12. Whatever punishment, therefore, was inflicted on our first parents, has also pervaded all their posterity, and still oppresses them: so that all are by nature children of wrath, Eph. ii, 31, obnoxious to condemnation and to death, temporal and eternal, Rom. v, 12, and are, lastly, devoid of that [primeval] righteousness and holiness: with which evils they would continue oppressed for ever, unless they were delivered from them by Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever! Rom. v, 18, 19."

In the epistle which Arminius addressed to Hippolytus, describing grace and free will, his views on this subject are still more clearly expressed:—

"It is impossible for free will without grace to begin or perfect any true or spiritual good. I say, the grace of Christ, which pertains to regeneration, is simply and absolutely necessary for the illumination of the mind, the ordering of the affections, and the inclination of the will to that which is good. It is that which operates on the mind, the affections, and the will; which infuses good thoughts into the mind, inspires good desires into the affections, and leads the will to execute good thoughts and good desires. It prevents, (goes before,) accompanies, and follows. It excites, assists, works in us to will, and works with us, that we may not will in vain. It averts temptations, stands by and aids us in temptations, supports us against the flesh, the world, and Satan; and, in the conflict, it grants us to enjoy the victory. It raises up again those who are conquered and fallen, it establishes them, and endues them with new strength, and renders them more cautious. It begins, promotes, perfects, and consummates salvation. I confess, that the mind of the natural (*animalis*) and carnal man is darkened, his affections are depraved and disordered, his will is refractory, and that the man is *dead in sins*."

And, in his 11th Public Disputation on the Free will of Man, and its powers, he says, "that the will of man, with respect to true good, is not only wounded, bruised, inferior, crooked, and attenuated; but it is

likewise *captivated*, *destroyed*, and *lost*; and has no powers whatever, except such as are excited by grace."

The doctrine of the remonstrants is, "That God, to the glory of his abundant goodness, having decreed to make man after his own image, and to give him an easy and most equal law, and add thereunto a threatening of death to the transgressors thereof, and foreseeing that Adam would wilfully transgress the same, and thereby make *himself* and his *posterity* liable to condemnation; though God was, notwithstanding, mercifully affected toward man, yet, out of respect to his justice and truth, he would not give way to his mercy to save man till his justice should be satisfied, and his serious hatred of sin and love of righteousness should be made known." The *condemnation* here spoken of, as affecting Adam and his posterity, is to be understood of more than the death of the body, as being opposed to the *salvation* procured by the sacrifice of Christ; and, with respect to the moral state of human nature since the fall, the third of their articles, exhibited, at the synod of Dort, states, that the remonstrants "hold that a man hath not saving faith of himself, nor from the power of his own free will, seeing that, while he is in the state of sin, he cannot of himself, nor by himself, think, will, or do any saving good." (9)

The doctrine of the Church of England, though often claimed as exclusively Calvinistic on this point, accords perfectly with true Arminianism. "Original sin standeth not in the following or imitation of Adam, as the Pelagians do vainly talk; but it is the fault or corruption of the nature of every man, that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam, whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness, and is of his own nature only inclined to evil," &c. Some of the divines of this Church have, on the other hand, endeavoured to soften this article, by availing themselves of the phrase "very far gone," as though it did not express a total defection from original righteousness. The articles were, however, subscribed by the two houses of convocation, in 1571, in Latin and English also, and therefore both copies are equally authentic. The Latin copy expresses this phrase by "*quam longissime distet*;" which is as strong an expression as that language can furnish, fixes the sense of the compilers on this point, and takes away the argument which rests on the alleged equivocalness of the English version. Nor does there appear any material discrepancy between this statement of the fallen condition of man and the Augsburgh Confession, the doctrine of the French Churches, that of the Calvinistic Church of Scotland, and, so far as the moral state of man only is concerned, the views of Calvin himself. There are, it is true, such expressions as "contagion," "infection," and the like, in some of these formularies, which are some-

(9) See tenets of the remonstrants, in Nichol's "Calvinism and Arminianism Compared."

what equivocal, as bearing upon a point from which some divines, both Arminians and Calvinists, have dissented,—the direct corruption of human nature by a sort of judicial act; but, this point excepted, to which we shall subsequently turn our attention, the true Arminian, as fully as the Calvinist, admits the doctrine of the total depravity of human nature in consequence of the fall of our first parents; and is indeed enabled to carry it through his system with greater consistency than the Calvinist himself. For, while the latter is obliged, in order to account for certain good dispositions and occasional religious inclinations in those who never give any evidence of their actual conversion to God, to refer them to *nature*, and not to grace, which, according to them, is not given to the reprobate, the believer in general redemption maintains the total incapacity of unassisted nature to produce such effects, and attributes them to that Divine gracious influence which, if not resisted, would lead on to conversion. Some of the doctrines joined by Calvinists with the corruption of our common nature are, indeed, very disputable, and such as we shall, in the proper place, attempt to prove unscriptural; but in this Arminians and they so well agree, that it is an entire delusion to represent this doctrine, as it is often done, as exclusively Calvinistic. "The Calvinists," says Bishop Tomline, "contend that the sin of Adam introduced into his nature such a radical impotence and depravity, that it is impossible for his descendants to make any voluntary effort [of themselves] toward piety and virtue, or in any respect to correct and improve their moral and religious character; and that faith and all the Christian graces are communicated by the sole and irresistible operation of the Spirit of God, without any endeavour or concurrence on the part of man." (*Refutation of Calvinism.*) The latter part only of this statement gives the Calvinistic peculiarity; the former is not exclusively theirs. We have seen the sentiment of Arminius on the natural state of man, and it perfectly harmonizes with that of Calvin where he says, in his own forcible manner, "that man is so totally overwhelmed, as with a deluge, that no part is free from sin, and therefore whatever proceeds from him is accounted sin." (*Institutes.*)

But in bringing all these opinions to the test of Scriptural testimony, we must first inquire into the import of the penalty of DEATH, threatened upon the offences of the first man.

The Pelagian and Socinian notion, that Adam would have died had he not sinned, requires no other refutation than the words of the Apostle Paul, who declares expressly that death entered the world "by sin," and so it inevitably follows that, as to man at least, but for sin there would have been no death.

The notion of others, that the death threatened extended to the annihilation of the soul as well as the body, and was only arrested by the interposition of a Redeemer, assumes a doctrine which has no counte-

nance at all in Scripture, namely, that the penalty of transgressing the Divine law, when it extends to the soul, is death in the sense of annihilation. On the contrary, whenever the threat of death, in Scripture, refers to the soul, it unquestionably means future and conscious punishment. Beside, the term "death," which conveys the threatening, does not properly express annihilation. There is no adequate opposition between life and annihilation. If there were such an opposition between them, then life and non-annihilation must be equivalent terms. But they are not; for many things exist which do not live; and thus both the sense attached to the term death, in Scripture, when applied to the soul, as well as the proper sense of that term itself, and the reason of the thing, forbid that interpretation.

The death threatened to Adam, we conclude, therefore, to have extended to the soul of man as well as to his body, though not in the sense of annihilation; but, for the confirmation of this, it is necessary to refer more particularly to the language of Scripture, which is its own best interpreter, and it will be seen, that the opinion of those divines who include in the penalty attached to the first offence, the very "fulness of death," as it has been justly termed, death *bodily*, *spiritual*, and *eternal*, is not to be puffed away by sarcasm, but stands firm on inspired testimony.

Beside death, as it is opposed to animal life, and which consists in the separation of the rational soul from the body, the Scriptures speak of the life and death of the soul in a *moral* sense. The first consists in the union of the soul to God, and is manifested by those vigorous, grateful, and holy affections, which are, by this union, produced. The second consists in a separation of the soul from communion with God, and is manifested by the dominion of earthly and corrupt dispositions and habits, and an entire indifference or aversion to spiritual and heavenly things. This, too, is represented as the state of all who are not quickened by the instrumentality of the Gospel, employed for this purpose by the power and agency of its Divine Author. "And you hath he quickened who were DEAD in trespasses and sins." The state of a regenerate mind is, in accordance with this view, represented as a resurrection, and a passing "from death unto life;" and both to Christ and to the Holy Spirit is this work of quickening the souls of men and preserving them in moral or spiritual life attributed. To interpret, then, the death pronounced upon Adam as including moral death, seeing that he, by his transgression, fell actually into the same moral state as a sinner against God, in which all those persons now are who are dead in trespasses and sins, is in entire accordance with the language of Scripture. For, if a state of sin in them is a state of spiritual death, then a state of sin in him was a state of spiritual death; and that both by natural consequence, the same cause producing the same effect, and

also by the appointment of God, who departs from sinful men, and, withdrawing himself from all communion with the guilty, withdraws thereby the only source of moral or spiritual life.

But the highest sense of the term "death," in Scripture, is the punishment of the soul in a future state, both by a loss of happiness and separation from God, and also by a positive infliction of Divine wrath. Now this is stated, not as peculiar to any dispensation of religion, but as common to all; as the penalty of the transgression of the law of God in every degree. "Sin is the transgression of the law," this is its definition; "the wages of sin is death," this is its penalty. Here we have no mention made of any particular sin, as rendering the transgressor liable to this penalty, nor of any particular circumstance under which sin may be committed, as calling forth that fatal expression of the Divine displeasure; but of sin itself generally:—of transgression of the Divine law, in every form and degree, it is affirmed, "the wages of sin is DEATH." This is, therefore, to be considered as an axiom in the jurisprudence of Heaven.* "Sin," says St. James, with like absolute and unqualified manner, "when it is finished, bringeth forth DEATH;" nor have we the least intimation given in Scripture, that any sin whatever is exempted from this penalty; that some sins are punished in this life only, and others in the life to come. The degree of punishment will be varied by the offence; but death is the penalty attached to all sin, unless it is averted by pardon, which itself supposes that in law the penalty has been incurred. What was there, then, in the case of Adam to take him out of this rule? His act was a *transgression* of the law, and therefore *sin*; as sin, its wages was "death," which, in Scripture, we have seen, means, in its highest sense, future punishment.

To this Dr. Taylor, whom most modern writers who deny the doctrine of original sin have followed, objects: "Death was to be the consequence of his disobedience, and the death here threatened can be opposed only to that life God gave Adam when he created him."

To this it has been replied:—

"True: but how are you assured, that God, when he created him, did not give him *spiritual*, as well as *animal*, life? Now *spiritual death* is opposed to *spiritual life*. And this is more than the *death* of the body.

"But this, you say, is pure conjecture, without a solid foundation. For no other life is spoken of before. Yes there is. *The image of God* is spoken of before. This is not therefore pure conjecture; but is grounded upon a solid foundation, upon the plain word of God. Allowing then that 'Adam could understand it of no other life than that which he had newly received;' yet would he naturally understand it of *the life of God in his soul, as well as of the life of his body*. In this light therefore the sense of the threatening will stand thus: 'Thou shalt

surely die;' as if he had said, I have formed thee of the dust of the ground, and 'breathed into thy nostrils the breath of lives,' both of animal and spiritual life; and in both respects thou art become a living soul. 'But if thou eatest of the forbidden tree, thou shalt cease to be a living soul. For I will take from thee' the lives I have given, and thou shalt die spiritually, temporally, eternally." (*Wesley on Original Sin.*)

The answer of President Edwards is more at large.

"To this I would say; it is true, *death is opposed to life, and must be understood according to the nature of that life, to which it is opposed.* But does it therefore follow, that nothing can be meant by it but the loss of life? Misery is opposed to happiness, and sorrow is in Scripture often opposed to joy; but can we conclude from thence, that nothing is meant in Scripture by sorrow, but the *loss of joy?* Or that there is no more in misery, than the *loss* or absence of happiness? And if the death threatened to Adam can, with certainty, be opposed only to the life *given to Adam, when God created him;* I think a state of perfect, perpetual, and hopeless misery is properly opposed to that state *Adam was in when God created him.* For I suppose it will not be denied, that the life Adam had, was truly a *happy* life; happy in perfect innocency, in the favour of his Maker, surrounded with the happy fruits and testimonies of his love. And I think it has been proved, that he also was happy in a state of perfect righteousness. Nothing is more manifest than that it is agreeable to a very common acceptation of the word *life* in Scripture, that it be understood as signifying a state of excellent and happy existence. Now that which is most opposite to *that life* and state *in which Adam was created,* is a state of total, confirmed wickedness, and perfect hopeless misery, under the Divine displeasure and curse; not excluding temporal death, or the destruction of the body, as an introduction to it.

"Beside, that which is much more evident than any thing Dr. T. says on this head, is, that the *death* which was to come on Adam, as the *punishment of his disobedience,* was opposed to that *life,* which he would have had as the *reward* of his *obedience* in case he had not sinned. *Obedience* and *disobedience* are contraries; the *threatenings* and *promises* which are sanctions of a law, are set in direct opposition; and the *promises, rewards,* and *threatened punishments,* are most properly taken as each other's opposites. But none will deny, that the life which would have been *Adam's reward,* if he had persisted in obedience, was *eternal life.* And therefore we argue justly that the death which *stands opposed to that life,* (Dr. T. himself being judge,) *is manifestly eternal death, a death widely different from the death we now die*—to use his own words. If Adam for his persevering *obedience,* was to have had everlasting life and happiness, in perfect holiness, union with his Maker, and enjoyment of his favour, and this was the

life which was to be confirmed by the tree of life; then, doubtless, the death threatened in case of disobedience, which stands in direct opposition to this, was an exposure to *everlasting wickedness and misery, in separation* from God, and in *enduring his wrath.*" (*Original Sin.*)

The next question is, whether Adam is to be considered as a mere individual, the consequences of whose misconduct terminated in himself, or no otherwise affected his posterity than incidentally, as the misconduct of an ordinary parent may affect the circumstances of his children; or whether he is to be regarded as a *public man*, the *head* and *representative* of the human race, who, in consequence of his fall, have fallen with him, and received direct hurt and injury in the very constitution of their bodies, and the moral state of their minds.

The testimony of Scripture is so explicit on this point, that all the attempts to evade it have been in vain. In Romans v, Adam and Christ are contrasted in their public or federal character, and the hurt which mankind have derived from the one, and the healing they have received from the other, are also contrasted in various particulars, which are equally represented as the effects of the "offence" of Adam, and of the "obedience" of Christ. Adam, indeed, in verse 14, is called, with evident allusion to this public representative character, the figure, (τυπος,) *type*, or *model* "of him that was to come." The same apostle also adopts the phrases, "the first Adam," and "the second Adam," which mode of speaking can only be explained on the ground, that as sin and death descended from one, so righteousness and life flow from the other; and that what Christ is to all his spiritual seed, that Adam is to all his natural descendants. On this, indeed, the parallel is founded, I Cor. xv, 22, "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive," words which on any other hypothesis can have no natural signification. Nor is there any weight in the observation, that this relation of Adam to his descendants is not expressly stated in the history of the fall; since, if it were not indicated in that account, the comment of an inspired apostle is, doubtless, a sufficient authority. But the fact is, that the threatenings pronounced upon the first pair have all respect to their posterity as well as to themselves. The death threatened affects all,—"In Adam all die," "death entered by sin," that is, by his sin, and then "passed upon all men." The painful childbearing threatened upon Eve has passed on to her daughters. The ground was cursed, but that affected Adam's posterity also, who, to this hour, are doomed to eat their bread by "the sweat of their brow." Even the first blessing, "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it," was clearly pronounced upon them as public persons, and both by its very terms and the nature of the thing, since they alone could neither replenish the earth nor subject it to their use and dominion, comprehended their posterity. In all these cases they are addressed in such a form of speech as is

appropriated to individuals; but the circumstances of the case infallibly show, that, in the whole transaction, they stood before their Maker as *public persons*, and as the legal *representatives* of their descendants, though in so many words they are not invested with these titles.

The condition in which this federal connection between Adam and his descendants placed the latter, remains to be exhibited. The imputation of Adam's sin to his posterity has been a point greatly debated. In the language of theologians it is considered as *mediate* or *immediate*. Our mortality of body and the corruption of our moral nature, in virtue of our derivation from him, is what is meant by the *mediate* imputation of his sin to us; by *immediate* imputation is meant that Adam's sin is accounted ours in the sight of God, by virtue of our federal relation. To support the latter notion, various illustrative phrases have been used: as, that Adam and his posterity constitute one *moral person*, and that the whole human race was in him, its head, consenting to his act, &c. This is so little agreeable to that distinct agency which enters into the very notion of an accountable being, that it cannot be maintained, and it destroys the sound distinction between original and actual sin. It asserts, indeed, the imputation of the actual commission of Adam's sin to his descendants, which is false in fact; makes us stand chargeable with the full latitude of his transgression, and all its attendant circumstances; and constitutes us, separate from all actual voluntary offence, equally guilty with him, all which are repugnant equally to our consciousness and to the equity of the case.

The other opinion does not, however, appear to go the length of Scripture, which must not be warped by the reasonings of erring man. There is another view of the imputation of the offence of Adam to us which is more consistent with its testimony. This is very clearly stated by Dr. Watts in his answer to Dr. Taylor.

"When a man has broken the law of his country, and is punished for so doing, it is plain that *sin is imputed to him: his wickedness is upon him; he bears his iniquity;* that is, he is reputed or accounted guilty: he is condemned and dealt with as an offender.

"But if a man, having committed treason, his estate is taken from him and his children, then they *bear the iniquity of their father*, and his sin is *imputed to them* also.

"If a man lose his life and estate for murder, and his children thereby become vagabonds, then the blood of the person murdered is said to be *upon the murderer* and *upon his children* also. So the Jews: *His blood be on us and on our children;* let us and our children be punished for it.

"But it may be asked, How can the acts of the parent's treason be *imputed* to his little child? Since those acts were quite out of the reach of an infant, nor was it possible for him to commit them?—I answer.

"Those acts of treason or acts of service are, by a common figure, said to be *imputed to the children*, when they suffer or enjoy the consequences of their father's treason or eminent service: though the *particular actions* of treason or service, could not be practised by the children. This would easily be understood should it occur in human history. And why not when it occurs in the sacred writings?

"*Sin* is taken either for an *act of disobedience* to a law, or for the *legal result* of such an act; that is, the *guilt*, or *liableness to punishment*. Now when we say, the sin of a traitor is *imputed to his children*, we do not mean, that the act of the father is charged upon the child; but that the guilt or liableness to punishment is so transferred to him that he suffers banishment or poverty on account of it.

"Thus the sin of Achan was so imputed to his children, that they were all stoned on account of it, Josh. vii, 24. In like manner the covetousness of Gehazi was *imputed* to his posterity, 2 Kings v, 27; when God by his prophet pronounced, that the leprosy should cleave unto him and to his seed for ever.

"The Scriptures, both of the Old and New Testament, use the words *sin* and *iniquity*, (both in Hebrew and Greek,) to signify not only the criminal *actions* themselves, but also the *result* and consequences of those actions, that is, the guilt or *liableness to punishment:* and sometimes the *punishment* itself, whether it fall upon the original criminal, or upon others on his account.

"Indeed, when sin or righteousness is said to be imputed to any man, on account of what himself hath done, the words usually denote both the good or evil actions themselves, and the legal result of them. But when the sin or righteousness of one person is said to be imputed to *another*, then generally those words mean only the result thereof; that is, a liableness to punishment on the one hand, and to reward on the other.

"But let us say what we will, in order to confine the sense of the imputation of sin and righteousness to the *legal result*, the reward or punishment of good or evil actions; let us ever so explicitly deny the imputation of the *actions* themselves to others, still Dr. Taylor will level almost all his arguments against the imputation of the actions themselves, and then triumph in having demolished what we never built, and in refuting what we never asserted."

In the sense then above given, we may safely contend for the imputation of Adam's sin; and this agrees precisely with the Apostle Paul, who speaks of the imputation of sin to those who "had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression," that is, to all who lived between Adam and Moses, and, consequently, to infants who personally had not offended; and also declares, that, "by one man's disobedience many were made, constituted, accounted, and dealt with as sinners," and

treated as though they themselves had actually sinned: for, that this is his sense, is clear from what follows, "so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous,"—constituted, accounted, and dealt with as such, though not actually righteous, but, in fact, pardoned criminals. The first consequence, then, of this imputation is the death of the body, to which all the descendants of Adam are made liable, and that on account of the sin of Adam—"through the offence of one many are dead." But though this is the first, it is far from being the only consequence. For, as throughout the apostle's reasoning in the fifth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, to which reference has been made, "the gift," "the free gift," "the gift by grace," mean one and the same thing, even the whole benefit given by the abounding grace of God, through the obedience of Christ; and as these verses are evidently parallel to 1st Corinthians xv, 22, "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive," "it follows that dying and being made alive, in the latter passage, do not refer to the body only, but that *dying* implies all the evils temporal and spiritual which are derived from Adam's sin, and *being made alive*, all the blessings which are derived from Christ in time and in eternity." (*Wesley on Original Sin.*)

The second consequence is, therefore, death *spiritual*, that moral state which arises from the withdrawment of that intercourse of God with the human soul, in consequence of its becoming polluted, and of that influence upon it which is the only source and spring of the right and vigorous direction and employment of its powers in which its rectitude consists; a *deprivation*, from which a *depravation* consequently and necessarily follows. This, we have before seen, was included in the original threatening, and if Adam was a public person, a representative, it has passed on to his descendants, who, in their natural state, are therefore said to be "*dead* in trespasses and sins." Thus it is that the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; and that all evils naturally "proceed from it," as corrupt streams from a corrupt fountain.

The third consequence is *eternal death*, separation from God, and endless banishment from his glory in a future state. This follows from both the above premises,—from the federal character of Adam; and from the eternal life given by Christ being opposed by the apostle to the death derived from Adam. The justice of this is objected to, a point which will be immediately considered; but it is now sufficient to say, that if the making the descendants of Adam liable to eternal death, because of his offence, be unjust, the infliction of temporal death is so also; the duration of the punishment making no difference in the simple question of justice. If punishment, whether of *loss* or of *pain*, be unjust, its measure and duration may be a greater or a less injustice; but it is

unjust in every degree. If, then, we only confine the hurt we have received from Adam to bodily death; if this legal result of his transgression only be imputed to us, and we are so constituted sinners as to become liable to it, we are in precisely the same difficulty, as to the equity of the proceeding, as when that legal result is extended farther. The only way out of this dilemma is that adopted by Dr. Taylor, to consider death not as a punishment, but as a blessing, which involves the absurdity of making Deity threaten a benefit as a *penalty* for an offence, which sufficiently refutes the notion.

The objections which have been raised against the imputation of Adam's offence, in the extent we have stated it, on the ground of the justice of the proceeding, are of two kinds. The former are levelled not against that Scriptural view of the case which has just been exhibited, but against that repulsive and shocking perversion of it which is found in the high Calvinistic creed, which consigns infants, not elect, to a conscious and endless punishment, and that not of loss only, but of pain, for this first offence of another. The latter springs from regarding the legal part of the whole transaction which affected our first parents and their posterity, separately from the evangelical provision of mercy which was concurrent with it, and which included, in like manner, both them and their whole race. With the high Calvinistic view we have now nothing to do. It will stand or fall with the doctrines of election and reprobation, as held by that school, and these will be examined in their place. The latter class of objections now claim our attention; and as to them we observe, that, as the question relates to the moral government of God, if one part of the transaction before us is intimately and inseparably connected with another and collateral procedure, it cannot certainly be viewed in its true light but in that connection. The redemption of man by Christ was not certainly an after thought brought in upon man's apostasy; it was a *provision*, and when man fell, he found justice hand in hand with mercy. What are, then, the facts of the *whole* case? For greater clearness, let us take Adam and the case of his *adult* descendants first. All become liable to bodily death; here was justice, the end of which is to support law, as that supports government. By means of the anticipated sacrifice of the Redeemer's atonement, which, as we shall in its place show, is an effectual means of declaring the justice of God, the sentence is reversed, not by exemption from bodily death, but by a happy and glorious resurrection. For, as this was an act of grace, almighty God was free to choose, speaking humanly, the circumstances under which it should be administered, in ordering which the unerring wisdom of God had its natural influence. The evil of sin was still to be kept visible before the universe, for its admonition, by the actual infliction of death upon all men; the grace was to be manifested in reparation of

the loss by restoration to immortality. Again, God, the fountain of spiritual life, forsook the soul of Adam, now polluted by sin, and unfit for his residence. He became morally dead and corrupt, and, as "that which is born of the flesh is flesh," this is the natural state of his descendants. Here was justice, a display of the evil of sin, and of the penalty which it ever immediately induces—man forsaken by God, and thus forsaken, a picture to the whole universe of corruption and misery, resulting from that departure from him which is implied in one sinful act. But that spiritual, quickening influence visits him from another quarter and through other means. The second Adam "is a quickening Spirit." The Holy Spirit is the purchase of his redemption, to be given to man, that he may again infuse into his corrupted nature the heavenly life, and sanctify and regenerate it. Here is the mercy. As to a future state, eternal life is promised to all men believing in Christ, which reverses the sentence of eternal death. Here again is the manifestation of mercy. Should this be rejected, he stands liable to the whole penalty, to the punishment of loss as the natural consequence of his corrupted nature which renders him unfit for heaven: to the punishment of even pain for the original offence, we may also, without injustice, say, as to an adult, whose actual transgressions, when the means of deliverance have been afforded him by Christ, is a consenting to all rebellion against God, and to that of Adam himself: and to the penalty of his own actual transgressions, aggravated by his having made light of the Gospel. Here is the collateral display of justice. In all this, it is impossible to impeach the equity of the Divine procedure, since no man suffers any loss or injury ultimately by the sin of Adam, but by his own wilful obstinacy—the "abounding of grace," by Christ, having placed before all men, upon their believing, not merely compensation for the loss and injury sustained by Adam, but infinitely higher blessings, both in kind or degree, than were forfeited in him. As to adults, then, the objection taken from Divine justice is unsupported.

We now come to the case of persons dying in *infancy*. The great consideration which leads to a solution of this case is found in Romans v, 18, "Therefore, as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation, even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life." In these words, the sin of Adam and the merits of Christ are pronounced to be co-extensive; the words applied to both are precisely the same, "*judgment* came upon ALL MEN," "the FREE GIFT came upon ALL MEN." If the whole human race be meant in the former clause, the whole human race is meant in the latter also; and it follows that as all are injured by the offence of Adam, so all are benefited by the obedience of Christ. Whatever, therefore, that benefit may be, all children dying in infancy must partake

of it, or there would be a large portion of the human race upon whom the "free gift," the effects of "the righteousness of one," did not "come," which is contrary to the apostle's words.

This benefit, whatever it might be, did not so "come upon all men" as to relieve them *immediately* from the sentence of death. This is obvious, from men being still liable to die, and from the existence of a corrupt nature or spiritual death in all mankind. As this is the case with adults, who grow up from a state of childhood, and who can both trace the corruptness of their nature to their earliest years, and were always liable to bodily death; so, for this reason, it did not come immediately upon children, whether they die in infancy or not.—For there is no more reason to conclude that those children who die in infancy were born with a pure nature, than they who live to manhood; and the fact of their being born liable to death, a part of the penalty, is sufficient to show that they were born under the whole malediction.

The "free gift," however, which has come upon all men, by the righteousness of one, is said to be "unto justification of life," the full reversal of the penalty of death; and, by "the abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness," the benefit extends to the "reigning in life by one, Jesus Christ." If the "free gift" is so given to all men that this is the end for which it is given, then is this "justification of life," and this "reigning in life by Jesus Christ," as truly within the reach of infants, dying in infancy, as within the reach of adults living to years of choice. This "free gift" is bestowed upon "all men," εις, *in order to* justification of life; it follows, then, that, in the case of infants, this gift may be connected with the end for which it was given, as well as in the case of adults, or it would be given in vain, and in fact be, in no sense whatever, a gift or benefit, standing opposed, in its result, to condemnation and death.

Now we know clearly by what means the "free gift," which is bestowed *in order* to justification of life, (that is, that act of God by which a sinner, under sentence of death, is adjudged to life,) is connected with that end in the case of adults. The gift "comes upon them," in its effects, very largely, independent of any thing they do—in the long suffering of God; in the instructions of the Gospel; the warnings of ministers; the corrective dispensations of Providence; above all, in *preventing grace*, and the *influences of the Holy Spirit* removing so much of their spiritual death as to excite in them various degrees of religious feeling, and enabling them to seek the face of God, to turn at his rebuke, and, by improving that grace, to repent and believe the Gospel. In a word, "justification of life" is offered them; nay, more, it is pressed upon them, and they fail of it only by rejecting it. If they yield and embrace the offer, then the end for

which "the free gift came" upon them is attained—"justification of life."

As to infants, they are not, indeed, born justified and regenerate; so that to say that original sin is taken away, as to infants, by Christ, is not the correct view of the case, for the reasons before given; but they are all born under the "free gift," the effects of the "righteousness" of one, which extended to "all men;" and this free gift is bestowed on them *in order to* justification of life, the adjudging of the condemned to live. All the mystery, therefore, in the case arises from this, that in adults we see the free gift connected with its *end*, actual justification, by acts of their own, repentance and faith; but as to infants, we are not informed by what process justification, with its attendant blessings, is actually bestowed, though the words of the apostle are express, that through "the righteousness of one" they are entitled to it. Nor is it surprising that this process should be hidden from us, since the Gospel was written for adults, though the benefit of it is designed for all; and the knowledge of this work of God, in the spirit of an infant, must presuppose an acquaintance with the properties of the human soul, which is, in fact, out of our reach. If, however, an infant is not capable of a voluntary acceptance of the benefit of the "free gift;" neither, on the other hand, is it capable of a voluntary rejection of it; and it is by rejecting it that adults perish. If much of the benefit of this "free gift" comes upon us as adults, independent of our seeking it; and if, indeed, the very power and inclination to seek justification of life is thus prevenient, and in the highest sense *free;* it follows, by the same rule of the Divine conduct, that the Holy Spirit may be given to children; that a Divine and an effectual influence may be exerted on them, which, meeting with no voluntary resistance, shall cure the spiritual death and corrupt tendency of their nature; and all this without supposing any great difference in the principle of the administration of this grace in their case and that of adults. But the different circumstances of children dying in their infancy, and adults, proves also that a different administration of the same grace, which is freely bestowed upon all, must take place. Adults are personal offenders, infants are not; for the former, confession of sin, repentance, and the trust of persons consciously perishing for their transgressions, are appropriate to their circumstances, but not to those of the latter; and the very wisdom of God may assure us that, in prescribing the terms of salvation, that is, the means by which the "free gift" shall pass to its issue, justification of life, the circumstances of the persons must be taken into account. The reason of pardon, in every case, is not repentance, not faith, not any thing done by man, but the merit of the sacrifice of Christ. Repentance and faith are, it is true, in the case of adults, a *sine qua non*, but in no sense the meritorious cause. The reasons of their being attached

to the promise, as conditions, are nowhere given, but they are nowhere enforced as such, except on adults. If, in adults, we see the meritorious cause working in conjunction with instrumental causes, they are capable of what is required; but when we see, even in adults, that, independent of their own acts, the meritorious cause is not inert, but fruitful in vital influence and gracious dealing, we see such a separation of the operation of the grand meritorious cause, and the subordinate instrumental causes, as to prove that the benefits of the death of Christ are not, in every *degree*, and consequently, on the same principle, not in every *case*, conferred under the restraints of conditions. So certainly is infant salvation attested by the Scriptures; so explicitly are we told that the free gift is come upon all men to justification of life, and that none can come short of this blessing but those who reject it.

But there is another class of instrumental causes to be taken into the account in the case of children; though they arise not out of their personal acts. The first and greatest, and general one, is the intercession of Christ himself, which can never be fruitless; and that children are the objects of his intercession is certain, both from his office as the intercessor of all mankind, the "mediator between God and *man*," that is, all men; and from his actually praying for children in the days of his abode on earth. "He took them up in his arms and *blessed* them;" which benediction was either in the form of prayer, or it was authoritative, which makes the case still stronger. As to their future state, he seems also to open a sufficiently encouraging view, when he declares that, "of such is the kingdom of heaven;" for, whether we understand this of future felicity, or of the Church, the case is settled; in neither case can they be under wrath, and liable to condemnation.

Other instrumental causes of the communication of this benefit to infants, wherever the ordinances of the Christian Church are established, and used in faith, are the prayers of parents, and baptism in the name of Christ; means which cannot be without their effect, both as to infants who die, and those who live; and which, as God's own ordinances, he cannot but honour, in different degrees, it may be, as to those who live and those whom he intends to call to himself; but which are still *means of grace*, and *channels of saving influence;* or they are dead forms, ill becoming that which is so eminently a dispensation, not of the letter, but of the spirit.

The injustice, then, alleged as implicated in the doctrine of original sin, when considered in this its *whole* and *Scriptural* view, entirely vanishes; and, at the same time, the evil of sin is manifested, and the justice also of the Lawgiver, for mercy comes not by relaxing the hold of justice. That still has its full manifestation in the exaction of vicarious obedience to death, even the death of the cross, from the second Adam, who made himself the federal head of fallen men, and gave

"justification unto life" only by his submission to "judgment unto condemnation."

Having thus established the import of the *death* threatened as the penalty of Adam's transgression, to include corporal, moral, or spiritual and eternal death; and showed that the sentence included also the whole of his posterity, our next step is to ascertain that moral condition in which men are actually born into the world, notwithstanding that gracious provision which is made in Christ for human redemption. On this the testimony of Scripture is so explicit and ample, and its humbling representations are so borne out by consciousness and by experience, that it may well be matter of surprise, that the *natural innocence* of human nature should ever have had its advocates, at least among those who profess to receive the Bible as the word of God. In entering upon the subject of this corruption of human nature, it must first be stated, that there are several facts of history and experience to be accounted for; and that they must all be taken into account in the different theories which are advocated.

1. That in all ages great, and even general wickedness has prevailed among those large masses of men which are called *nations*.

So far as it relates to the immediate descendants of Adam before the flood; to all the nations of the highest antiquity; to the Jews throughout every period of their history, down to their final dispersion; and to the empires and other states whose history is involved in theirs; we have the historical evidence of Scripture, and much collateral evidence also from their own historians

To what does this evidence go, but, to say the least, the actual depravity of the majority of mankind in all these ages, and among all these nations? As to the race before the flood, a murderer sprang up in the first family, and the world became increasingly corrupt, until "God saw that the wickedness of man was great, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually;" "that all flesh had corrupted their way upon earth;" and that "the earth was filled with violence through them." Only Noah was found righteous before God; and because of the universal wickedness, a wickedness which spurned all warning, and resisted all correction, the flood was brought upon the *world of the ungodly*, as a testimony of Divine anger.

The same course of increasing wickedness is exhibited in the sacred records as taking place after the flood. The building of the tower of Babel was a wicked act, done by general concert, before the division of nations; this we know from its having excited the Divine displeasure, though we know not in what the particular crime consisted. After the division of nations, the history of the times of Abraham, Lot, Jacob, Joseph, and Moses, sufficiently show that idolatry, injustice, oppression,

and gross sensualities characterized the people of Canaan, Egypt, and every other country mentioned in the Mosaic narrative.

The obstinate inclination of the Israelites to idolatry, through all ages to the Babylonish captivity, and the general prevalence of vice among men, is acknowledged in every part of the Old Testament. Their moral wickedness, after their return from Babylon, when they no longer practised idolatry, and were, therefore, delivered from that most fruitful source of crime, may be collected from the writers of the Old Testament who lived after that event; and their general corruption in the time of our Lord and his apostles stands forth with disgusting prominence in their writings and in the writings of Josephus, their own historian.

As to all other ancient nations, of whom we have any history, the accounts agree in stating the general prevalence of practical immorality and of malignant and destructive passions; and if we had no such acknowledgments from themselves; if no such reproaches were mutually cast upon each other; if history were not, as indeed it is, a record of crimes, in action and in detail; and if poets, moralists, and satirists did not all give their evidence, by assuming that men were influenced by general principles of vice, expressing themselves in particular modes in different ages, the following great facts would prove the case:—

The fact of GENERAL RELIGIOUS ERROR, and that in the very fundamental principles of religion, such as the existence of one only God; which universal corruption of doctrine among all the ancient nations mentioned above, shows both indifference to truth and hostility against it, and therefore proves, at least, the *general* corruption of men's hearts, of which even indifference to religious truth is a sufficient indication.

The universal prevalence of IDOLATRY, which not only argues great debasement of intellect, but deep wickedness of heart, because, in all ages, idolatry has been more or less immoral in its influence, and generally grossly so, by leading directly to sanguinary and impure practices.

The prevalence of SUPERSTITION wherever idolatry has prevailed, and often when that has not existed, is another proof. The essence of this evil is the transfer of fear and hope from God to real or imaginary creatures and things, and so is a renunciation of allegiance to God, as the Governor of the world, and a practical denial either of his being or his providence.

Aggressive WARS, in the guilt of which all nations and all uncivilized tribes have been, in all ages, involved, and which necessarily suppose hatred, revenge, cruelty, injustice, and ambition.

The accounts formerly given of the innocence and harmlessness of the Hindoos, Chinese, the inhabitants of the South Sea Islands, and other parts of the world, are now found to be total mistakes or wilful falsehoods.

In all heathen nations, idolatry, superstition, fraud, oppression, and vices of almost every description, show the general state of society to be exceedingly and even destructively corrupt; and though Mohammedan nations escape the charge of idolatry, yet pride, avarice, oppression, injustice, cruelty, sensuality, and gross superstition, are all prevalent among them.

The case of Christian nations, though in them immorality is more powerfully checked than in any other, and many bright and influential examples of the highest virtue are found among their inhabitants, sufficiently proves that the majority are corrupt and vicious in their habits. The impiety and profaneness; the neglect of the fear and worship of God; the fraud and villany continually taking place in the commerce of mankind; the intemperance of various kinds which is found among all classes; the oppression of the poor; and many other evils, are in proof of this; and, indeed, we may confidently conclude, that no advocate of the natural innocence of man will contend that the *majority* of men, even in this country, are actually virtuous in their external conduct, and much less that the fear and love of God, and habitual respect to his will, which are, indeed, the only principles which can be deemed to constitute a person righteous, influence the people at large, or even any very large proportion of them.

The fact, then, is established, which was before laid down, that men in all ages and in all places have, at least, been generally wicked.

2. The second fact to be accounted for is, the strength of that tendency to the wickedness which we have seen to be general.

The strength of the corrupting principle, whatever it may be, is marked by two circumstances.

The first is, the greatness of the crimes to which men have abandoned themselves.

If the effects of the corrupt principle had only been manifested in trifling errors, and practical infirmities, a softer view of the moral condition in which man is born into the world might, probably, have been admitted; but in the catalogue of human crimes, in all ages, and among great numbers of all nations, but more especially among those nations where there has been the least control of religion, and, therefore, where the *natural* dispositions of men have exhibited themselves under the simplest and most convincing evidence, we find frauds, oppressions, faithlessness, barbarous cruelties and murders, unfeeling oppressions, falsehoods, every kind of uncleanness, uncontrolled anger, deadly hatred and revenge, as to their fellow creatures, and proud and scornful rebellion against God.

The second is, the number and influence of the checks and restraints against which this tide of wickedness has urged on its almost resistless and universal course.

It has opposed itself against the law of God, in some degree found among all men; consequently, against the checks and remorse of conscience; against a settled conviction of the evil of most of the actions indulged in, which is shown by their having been blamed in others (at least whenever any have suffered by them) by those who themselves have been in the habit of committing them.

Against the restraints of human laws, and the authority of magistrates; for, in all ancient states, the moral corruption continued to spread until they were politically dissolved, society not being able to hold itself together, in consequence of the excessive height to which long indulgence had raised passion and appetite.

Against the provision made to check human vices by that judicial act of the Governor of the world, by which he shortened the life of man, and rendered it uncertain, and, at the longest, brief.

Against another provision made by the Governor of the world, in part with the same view, *i. e.* the dooming of man to earn his sustenance by labour, and thus providing for the occupation of the greater portion of time in what was innocent, and rendering the means of sensual indulgences more scanty, and the opportunities of actual immorality more limited.

Against the restraints put upon vice, by rendering it, by the constitution and the very nature of things, the source of misery of all kinds and degrees, national, domestic, personal, mental, and bodily.

Against the terrible judgments which God has, in all ages, brought upon wicked nations and notorious individuals, many of which visitations were known and acknowledged to be the signal manifestations of his displeasure against their vices.

Against those counteractive and reforming influences of the revelations of the will and mercy of God, which at different times have been vouchsafed to the world: as, against the light and influence of the patriarchal religion before the giving of the law; against the Mosaic institute, and the warnings of prophets among the Jews; against the religious knowledge which was transmitted from them among heathen nations connected with their history, at different periods; against the influence of Christianity when introduced into the Roman empire, and when transmitted to the Gothic nations, by all of whom it was grossly corrupted; and against the control of the same Divine religion in our own country, where it is exhibited in its purity, and in which the most active endeavours are adopted to enlighten and correct society.

It is impossible to consider the number and power of these checks without acknowledging, that those principles in human nature which give rise to the mass of moral evil which actually exists, and has always existed since men began to multiply upon the earth, are most powerful and formidable in their tendency.

3. The third fact is, that the seeds of the vices which exist in society may be discovered in children in their earliest years; selfishness, envy, pride, resentment, deceit, lying, and often cruelty; and so much is this the case, so explicitly is this acknowledged by all, that it is the principal object of the moral branch of education to restrain and correct those evils, both by coercion, and by diligently impressing upon children, as their faculties open, the evil and mischief of all such affections and tendencies.

4. The fourth fact is, that every man is conscious of a natural tendency to many evils.

These tendencies are different in degree and in kind. (1) In some they move to ambition, and pride, and excessive love of honour; in others, to anger, revenge, and implacableness; in others, to cowardice, meanness, and fear; in others, to avarice, care, and distrust; in others, to sensuality and prodigality. But where is the man who has not his peculiar constitutional tendency to some evil in one of these classes? But there are, also, evil tendencies common to all. These are, to love creatures more than God; to forget God; to be indifferent to our obligations to him; to regard the opinions of men more than the approbation of God; to be more influenced by the visible things which surround us than by the invisible God, whose eye is ever upon us, and by that invisible state to which we are all hastening.

It is the constant practice of those who advocate the natural innocence of man, to lower the standard of the Divine law under which man is placed; and to this they are necessarily driven, in order to give some plausibility to their opinions. They must palliate the conduct of men; and this can only be done by turning moral evils into natural ones, or into innocent infirmities, and by so stating the requisitions made upon our obedience by our Maker, as to make them consistent with many irregularities. But we have already shown, that the love of God requires our supreme love and our entire obedience; and it will, therefore, follow, that whatever is contrary to love and to entire subjection, whether in principle, in thought, in word, and in action, is sinful; and if so, then the tendency to evil, in every man, must, and on these premises will, be allowed. Nor will it serve any purpose to say, that man's weakness and infirmity is such that he cannot yield this perfect obedience; for means of sanctification and supernatural aid are provided for him in the Gospel; and what is it that renders him indifferent to them but the corruptness of his heart?

Beside, this very plea allows all we contend for. It allows that the law is lowered, because of human inability to observe it and to

(1) "Omnia in omnibus vitri sunt; sed non omnia in singulis extant." (*Seneca.*)

resist temptation; but this itself proves, (were we even to admit the fiction of this lowering of the requisitions of the law,) that man is not now in the state in which he was created, or it would not have been necessary to bring the standard of obedience down to his impaired condition.

5. The fifth fact is, that, even after a serious wish and intention has been formed in men to renounce these views, and "to live righteously, soberly, and godly," as becomes creatures made to glorify God, and on their trial for eternity, strong and constant resistance is made by the passions, appetites, and inclinations of the heart at every step of the attempt.

This is so clearly a matter of universal experience, that, in the moral writings of every age and country, and in the very phrases and turns of all languages, virtue is associated with difficulty, and represented under the notion of a warfare. Virtue has always, therefore, been represented as the subject of acquirement; and resistance of evil as being necessary to its preservation. It has been made to consist in self rule, which is, of course, restraint upon opposite tendencies; the mind is said to be subject to diseases, (2) and the remedy for these diseases is placed in something outward to itself—in religion, among inspired men; in philosophy, among the heathen. (3)

This constant struggle against the rules and resolves of virtue has been acknowledged in all ages, and among Christian nations more especially, where, just as the knowledge of what the Divine law requires is diffused, the sense of the difficulty of approaching to its requisitions is felt; and in proportion as the efforts made to conform to it are sincere, is the despair which arises from repeated and constant defeats, when the aid of Divine grace is not called in. "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

These five facts of universal history and experience, as they cannot be denied, and as it would be most absurd to discuss the moral condition of human nature without any reference to them, must be accounted for; and it shall now be our business to inquire, whether they can be best explained on the hypothesis drawn from the Scripture, that man is by nature totally corrupt and degenerate, and of himself incapable of any good thing; or on the hypothesis of man's natural goodness, or, at worst, his natural indifference equally to good and to evil; notions which come to us *ab initio* with this disadvantage, that they have no text of Scripture to adduce to afford them any plausible support whatever.

(2) "Hâc conditione nati sumus, animalia obnoxia non paucioribus animi quam corporis morbis." (*Seneca.*)

(3) "Videamus quanta sint quæ a philosophiâ remedia morbis animorum adhibeantur; est enim quædam medicina certâ," &c. (*Cicero.*)

The testimony of Scripture is decidedly in favour of the first hypothesis.

It has already been established, that the full penalty of Adam's offence passed upon his posterity; and, consequently, that part of it which consists in the spiritual death which has been before explained. A full provision to meet this case is, indeed, as we have seen, made in the Gospel; but that does not affect the state in which men are born. It is a cure for an actually existing disease brought by us into the world; for, were not this the case, the evangelical institution would be one of prevention, not of remedy, under which light it is always represented.

If, then, we are all born in a state of spiritual death; that is, without that vital influence of God upon our faculties, which we have seen to be necessary to give them a right, a holy tendency, and to maintain them in it; and if that is restored to man by a dispensation of grace and favour, it follows that, in his natural state, he is born with sinful propensities, and that, by nature, he is capable, in his own strength, of "no good thing."

With this the Scriptural account agrees.

It is probable, though great stress need not be laid upon it, that when it is said, Gen. v, 3, that "Adam begat a son in his own likeness," that there is an implied opposition between the likeness of God, in which Adam was made, and the likeness of Adam, in which his son was begotten. It is not said, that he begat a son in the likeness of God; a very appropriate expression if Adam had not fallen, and if human nature had sustained, in consequence, no injury; and such a declaration was apparently called for, had this been the case, to show, what would have been a very important fact, that, notwithstanding the personal delinquency of Adam, yet human nature itself had sustained no deterioration, but was propagated without corruption. On the contrary, it is said, that he begat a son in his own likeness; which, probably, was mentioned on purpose to exclude the idea, that the image of God was hereditary in man.

In Gen. vi, 5, it is stated, as the cause of the flood, that "God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." Here, it is true, that the actual moral state of the antediluvians may only be spoken of, and that the text does not *directly* prove the doctrine of hereditary depravity: yet is the actual wickedness of man traced up to the *heart*, as its natural source, in a manner which seems to intimate, that the doctrine of the natural corruption of man was held by the writer, and by that his mode of expression was influenced. "The heart of man is here put for his soul. This God had formed with a marvellous thinking power. But so is his soul debased, that every *imagination*, figment, formation of the thoughts of it, is *evil*, *only* evil, *continually* evil. What-

ever it forms within itself as a thinking power, is an evil formation. If all men's actual wickedness sprung from the evil formation of their corrupt heart, and if, consequently, they were sinners from the birth, so are all others likewise." (*Hebden.*)

That this was the theological sentiment held and taught by Moses, and implied even in this passage, is made very clear by Gen. viii, 21, "I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake: for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more every living thing." The sense of which plainly is, that, notwithstanding the wickedness of mankind, though they sin from their childhood, yet would he not, on that account, again destroy "every living thing." Here it is to be observed, 1. That the words are spoken as soon as Noah came forth from the ark, and, therefore, after the antediluvian race of actual and flagrant transgressors had perished, and before the family of Noah had begun to multiply upon the earth; when, in fact, there were no human beings upon earth but righteous Noah and his family. 2. That they are spoken of "man" AS MAN; that is, of human nature, and, consequently, of Noah himself and the persons saved with him in the ark. 3. That it is affirmed of MAN, that is, of mankind, that the imagination of the heart "is evil from his youth." Now the term "imagination" includes the thoughts, affections, and inclinations; and the word "youth" the whole time from the birth, the earliest age of man. This passage, therefore, affirms the natural and hereditary tendency of man to evil.

The book of Job, which embodies the patriarchal theology, gives ample testimony to this as the faith of those ancient times. Job xi, 12, "Vain man would be wise, though man be born like a wild ass's colt;" fierce, untractable, and scarcely to be subjected. This is the case from his *birth;* it is affirmed of *man*, and is equally applicable to every age; it is his *natural* condition, he is "*born*," literally, "*the colt of a wild ass.*"

"Man is born unto trouble as the sparks fly upward," Job v, 7; that is, he is inevitably subjected to trouble; this is the law of his state in this world, as fixed and certain as one of the laws of nature. The proof from this passage is inferential; but very decisive. Unless man is born a sinner, it is not to be accounted for, that he should be born to trouble. Pain and death are the consequences only of sin, and absolutely innocent beings must be exempt from them.

"Who can bring a clean *thing* out of an unclean?" Job xiv, 4. The word thing is supplied by our translators, but *person* is evidently understood. Cleanness and uncleanness, in the language of Scripture, signify sin and holiness; and the text clearly asserts the natural impossibility of any man being born sinless, because he is produced by guilty and defiled parents.

"What is man, that he should be clean; and he which is born of a woman, that he should be righteous?" Job xv, 14. The same doctrine is here affirmed as in the preceding text, only more fully, and it may be taken as an explanation of the former, which was, perhaps, a proverbial expression. The rendering of the LXX. is here worthy of notice, for, though it does not agree with the present Hebrew text, it strongly marks the sentiments of the ancient Jews on the point in question. "Who shall be clean from filth? Not one; even though his life on earth *be a single day.*"

Psalm li, 5, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me." What possible sense can be given to this passage on the hypothesis of man's natural innocence? It is in vain to render the first clause, "I was *brought forth* in iniquity;" for nothing is gained by it. David charges nothing upon his mother, of whom he is not speaking, but of himself: he was conceived, or, if it please better, was born a sinner. And if the rendering of the latter clause were allowed, which yet has no authority, "in sin did my mother *nurse* me;" still no progress is made in getting quit of its testimony to the moral corruption of children, for it is the child only which is *nursed*, and, if that be allowed, natural depravity is allowed, depravity before reasonable choice, which is the point in question.

Psalm lviii, 3, 4, "The wicked are estranged from the womb, they go astray as soon as they are born, speaking lies." They are *alienated* from the womb; "alienated from the life of God, from the time of their coming into the world." (*Wesley.*) "Speaking lies:" they show a tendency to speak lies as soon as they are capable of it, which shows the existence of a natural principle of falsehood.

Proverbs xxii, 15, and xxix, 15, "Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him." "The rod and reproof give wisdom, but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame." "These passages put together are a plain testimony of the inbred corruption of young children. 'Foolishness,' in the former, is not barely 'appetite,' or a want of the knowledge attainable by instruction, as some have said. Neither of these deserve that sharp correction recommended. But it is an indisposedness to what is good, and a strong propensity to evil. This foolishness 'is bound up in the heart of a child;' it is rooted in his inmost nature. It is, as it were, fastened to him by strong cords; so the original word signifies. From this corruption of the heart in every child, it is that 'the rod of correction' is necessary to give him wisdom; hence it is that a child left to himself, without correction, 'brings his mother to shame.' If a child were born equally inclined to virtue and vice, why should the wise man speak of foolishness, or wickedness as fastened so closely to his heart? And why should the rod and reproof be so

necessary for him? These texts, therefore, are another clear proof of the corruption of human nature." (*Hebden.*)

The quotation of Psalm xiv, 2, 3, by the Apostle Paul, in Romans iii, 10, &c, is also an important Scriptural proof of the universal moral corruption of mankind. "The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God. They are all gone aside, they are altogether become filthy; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." When the psalmist affirms this of the *children of men*, it is fair to conclude that he is speaking of all men, and of human nature as originating actual depravity; and it is, indeed, obvious, from the context, that he is thus accounting for Atheism and other evils, the prevalence of which he laments. But, as the apostle quotes this passage and the parallel one in the 53d Psalm as Scriptural proofs of the *universal* corruption of mankind, the sense of the psalmist is fixed by his authority, and cannot be questioned. All, indeed, that the opponents of this interpretation can say, is, that, in the same psalm the psalmist speaks also of righteous persons, "God is in the generation of the *righteous*;" but that is nothing to the purpose, seeing that those who contend for the universal corruption of mankind, allow also that a remedy has been provided for the evil; and that by its application some, in every age, have been made righteous, who were originally and naturally sinful. In fact, it could not be said, with respect to men's actual moral conduct in that, or probably in any age, that "not one" was "righteous;" but in every age it may be said, that not one is so originally, or by nature; so that the passage is not to be explained on the assumption that the inspired writer is speaking only of the practice of mankind in his own times.

Of the same kind are all those passages which speak of what is morally evil as the characteristic and distinguishing mark, not of any individual, not of any particular people, living in some one age or part of the world; but of man, of human nature; and especially those which make sinfulness the natural state of that part of the human race who have not undergone that moral renovation which is the fruit of a Divine operation in the heart, a work ascribed particularly to the Holy Spirit. Of these texts the number is very great, and it adds also to the strength of their evidence, that the subject is often mentioned incidentally, and by way of illustration and argument in support of something else, and must, therefore, be taken to be an acknowledged and settled opinion among the sacred writers, both of the Old and New Testament, and one which neither they nor those to whom they spoke or wrote questioned or disputed.

"Cursed," says the Prophet Jeremiah, "is he that trusteth in MAN." Why in man, if he were not by nature unworthy of trust? On the scheme of man's natural innocence, it would surely have been more appropriate

to say, Cursed be he that trusteth indiscriminately in men, some of whom may have become corrupt; but here human nature itself, man, in the abstract, is held up to suspicion and caution. "The heart," proceeds the same prophet, "is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, who can know it?" which is the reason adduced for the caution preceding against trusting in man. It is precisely in the same way that our Lord designates human nature, when he affirms, that "from within, out of the heart, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, murders, &c; all these things come from within, and defile the man." This representation would not be true, on the scheme of natural innocence. All these things would come from *without*, not from *within*, as their original source. The heart must first be corrupted by outward circumstances, before it could be the corrupter.

But to proceed with instances of the more incidental references to the fault and disease of man's very nature, with which the Scriptures abound. "How much more abominable and filthy is *man*, who drinketh iniquity like water?" Job xv, 16. "Madness is in the heart of the *sons of men*, while they live," Eccles. ix, 3. "But they like *men* have transgressed the covenant," Hos. vi, 7. "If *ye, being evil*, know how to give good gifts unto your children," Matt. vii, 11. "Thou savourest not the things that be of God; but the things that be of MEN," Matt. xvi, 23. "Are ye not carnal, and walk as MEN?" 1 Cor. iii, 3. "That he no longer should live the rest of his time in the lusts of *men*; but to the will of God," 1 Peter iv, 2. "We are of God, and the whole *world* lieth in wickedness," 1 John v, 19. "Except a man *be born again*, he cannot see the kingdom of GOD," John iii, 8. "That ye put off the *old man*, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man," Eph. iv, 22–24.

The above texts are to be considered as specimens of the manner in which the sacred writers speak of the subject rather than as approaching to an enumeration of the passages in which the same sentiments are found in great variety of expression, and which are adduced on various occasions. They are, however, sufficient to show, that *man*, and the *heart of man*, and the moral nature of man, as spoken of by them in a way not to be reconciled to the notion of their purity, or even their indifference to good and evil. On two parts of the New Testament, however, which irresistibly fix the whole of this evidence in favour of the opinion of the universal Church of Christ, in all ages, our remarks may be somewhat more extended. The first is our Lord's discourse with Nicodemus, John iii, in which he declares the necessity of a new birth, in contradistinction to our natural birth, in order to our entrance into the kingdom of GOD; and lays it down, that the Spirit of God is the sole author of this change, and that what is born of the flesh cannot alter its nature; it is flesh still, and must always remain so, and in that state is

unfit for heaven. "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God; that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." Throughout the New Testament, it will be found, that when flesh and spirit are, in a moral sense, opposed to each other, the one means the corrupt nature and habits of men, not sanctified by the Gospel; the other, either the principle and habit of holiness in good men, or the Holy Spirit himself, who imparts, and constantly nurtures them. "I know that in me (that is, in my *flesh*) dwelleth no good thing," Rom. vii, 18. "I myself with the mind serve the law of God; but with the *flesh*, the law of sin," Rom. vii, 25. "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the *flesh*, but after the Spirit," Rom. viii, 1. "They that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be *carnally minded* is death; but to be *spiritually minded* is life and peace. Because the *carnal mind* is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are *in the flesh* cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you," Rom. viii, 5–9.

These passages from St. Paul serve to fix the meaning of the terms flesh and Spirit, as used by the Jews, and as they occur in the discourse of our Lord with Nicodemus; and they are so exactly parallel to it, that they fully confirm the opinion of those who understand our Lord as expressly asserting, that man is by nature corrupt and sinful, and unfit, in consequence, for the kingdom of heaven; and that all amendment of his case must result, not from himself, so totally is he gone from original righteousness; but from that special operation of the Holy Spirit which produces a new birth or regeneration. Both assert the natural state of man to be fleshly, that is, morally corrupt; both assert, that in man himself there is no remedy; and both attribute principles of holiness to a supernatural agency, the agency of the Spirit of God himself.

No criticism can make this language consistent with the theory of natural innocence. St. Paul describes the state of man, before he comes under the quickening and renewing influence of the Spirit, as being "in the flesh;" in which state "he *cannot* please God;" as having a "carnal mind" which "is not, and *cannot* be, subject to the law of God." Our Lord, in like manner, describes the state of "the flesh," this condition of entire unfitness for the kingdom of heaven as our *natural* state; and to make this the stronger, he refers this unfitness for heaven not to our acquired habits, but to the state in which we are born; for the very reason which he gives for the necessity of a new birth is, that "that which is *born* of the flesh is flesh," and therefore we "must be *born again*." To interpret, therefore, the phrase, "to be flesh, as being born of the flesh," merely to signify that we are, by natural birth, endowed with the physical powers

of human nature, is utterly absurd; for what, then, is it to be born of the Spirit? Is it to receive physical powers which do not belong to human nature? Or, if they go a step farther, and admit, that "to be flesh as being born of the flesh," means to be frail and mortal like our parents; still the interpretation is a physical and not a moral one, and leads to this absurdity, that we must interpret the being born of the Spirit physically and not morally, likewise. Now since the being born of the Spirit refers to a change which is effected in *time*, and not at the resurrection, because our Lord speaks of being "born of *water*," as well as the Spirit, by which he means baptism; and, as St. Paul says to the Romans, in the passage above quoted, "ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit;" and therefore speaks of their present experience in this world, it may be asked, what *physical* change did, in reality, take place in them in consequence of being "born of the Spirit?" On all hands it is allowed, that none took place; that they remained "frail and mortal" still; and it follows, therefore, that it is a moral and not a physical change which is spoken of, both by our Lord and by the apostle; and, if a moral change from sin to holiness, then is the natural state of man from his birth, and in consequence of his birth, sinful and corrupt.

The other passage is the argument in the third chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, in which the apostle "proves both Jews and Gentiles under sin, that *every mouth* may be stopped, and *all the world* may become guilty before God;" and then proposes the means of salvation by faith in Christ, on the express ground that "*all* have sinned and come short of the glory of God." Whoever reads that argument, and considers the universality of the terms used, ALL, EVERY, ALL THE WORLD, BOTH JEWS AND GENTILES, must conclude, in all fairness of interpretation, that the whole human race, of every age, is intended. But, if any will construe his words partially, then he is placed in the following dilemma:—The apostle grounds the wisdom and mercy of that provision which is made for man's salvation in the Gospel upon man's sinfulness, danger, and helplessness. Now the Gospel as a remedy for disease, as salvation from danger, is designed for all men, or but for a part; if for all, then all are diseased and in danger; if but for a part, then the undiseased part of the human race, those who are in no danger, have no interest in the Gospel, it is not adapted to their case; and not only is the argument of the apostle lost, but those who advocate this notion must explain how it is, that our Lord himself commanded the Gospel to be preached "to *every creature*," if but a part of mankind needs its salvation.

The doctrine, then, of Scripture is, I think, clearly established to be, that of the natural and universal corruption of man's nature; and we now consider, whether on this ground, or on the hypothesis of man's natural innocence or indifference to good or to evil, the facts above

enumerated can be best explained. They are, 1. The, at least, *general* corruption of manners in all times and countries. 2. The strength of the tendency in man to evil. 3. The early appearance of the principles of various vices in children. 4. Every man's consciousness of a natural tendency in his mind to one or more evils. 5. That general resistance to virtue in the heart, which renders education, influence, watchfulness, and conflict necessary to counteract the force of evil. These points have been already explained more at large; and they are facts which, it is presumed, cannot be denied, and such as have the confirmation of history and experience.

That they are easily and fully accounted for by the Scriptural doctrine is obvious. The fountain is bitter, and the tree is corrupt; the bitter stream and the bad fruit are, therefore, the natural consequences. But the advocates of the latter hypothesis have no means of accounting for these moral phenomena, except by referring them to bad example and a vicious education.

Let us take the first. To account for general wickedness, they refer to general example.

But, 1. This does not account for the introduction of moral wickedness. The children of Adam were not born until after the repentance of our first parents and their restoration to the Divine favour. They appear to have been his devout worshippers, and to have had access to his "presence," the visible glory of the Shechinah. From what example, then, did Cain learn malice, hatred, and finally, murder? Example will not account, also, for the too common fact of the children of highly virtuous parents becoming immoral; for, since the examples *nearest* to them and constantly present with them are good examples, if the natural disposition were as good as this hypothesis assumes, the good example always present ought to be more influential than bad examples at a distance, and only occasionally seen or heard of.

2. If men are naturally disposed to good, or only not indisposed to it, it is not accounted for, on this hypothesis, how bad example should have become general, that is, how men should generally have become wicked.

If the natural disposition be more in favour of good than evil, then there ought to have been more good than evil in the world, which is contradicted by fact; if there had been only an indifference in our minds to good and evil, then at least, the quantum of vice and virtue in society ought to have been pretty equally divided, which is also contrary to fact; and also it ought to have followed from this, that at least all the children of virtuous persons would have been virtuous: that, for instance, the descendants of Seth would have followed in succession the steps of their righteous forefathers, though the children of Cain (passing by the difficulty of his own lapse) should have become vicious. On

neither supposition can the existence of a *general* evil example in the world be accounted for. It ought not to have existed, and if so, the general corruption of mankind cannot be explained by it.

3. This very method of explaining the general viciousness of society does itself suppose the power of bad example; and, indeed, in this it agrees with universal opinion. All the moralists of public and domestic life, all professed teachers, all friends of youth, all parents have repeated their cautions against evil society to those whom they wished to preserve from vice. The writings of moralists, heathen and inspired, are full of these admonitions, and they are embodied in the proverbs and wise traditional sayings of all civilized nations. But the very force of evil example can only be accounted for, by supposing a *proneness* in youth to be corrupted by it. Why should it be more influential than good example, a fact universally acknowledged, and so strongly felt, that, for one person preserved by the sole influence of a good example, every body expects that a great number would be corrupted by an evil one? But if the hypothesis of man's natural innocence were true, this ought not to be expected as a probable, much less as a certain result. Bad example would meet with resistance from a good nature; and it would be much more difficult to influence by bad examples than by good ones.

4. Nor does example account for the other facts in the above enumeration. It does not account for that *strong* bias to evil in men, which, in all ages, has borne down the most powerful restraints; for from this tendency that corrupt general example has sprung, which is alleged as the cause of it; and it must, therefore, have existed previously, because the general example, that is, the general corrupt practice of men is its effect. We cannot, in this way, account for the early manifestation of wrong principles, tempers, and affections in children; since they appear at an age when example can have little influence, and even when the surrounding examples are good, as well as when they are evil. Why, too, should virtue always be found more or less a conflict? so that self-government and self-resistance are, in all cases, necessary for its preservation. The example of others will not account for this; for mere example can only influence when it is approved by the judgment; but here is a case in which evil is not approved, in which "whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are pure," are approved, desired, and cultivated; and yet the resistance of the heart to the judgment is so powerful, that a constant warfare and a strict command are necessary to perseverance.

Let us, then, see whether a bad education, the other cause, usually alleged to account for these facts, will be more successful.

1. This cause will no more account for the introduction of passions so hateful as those of Cain, issuing in a fratricide so odious, into the

family of Adam, than will example. As there was no example of these evils in the primeval family, so certainly there was no education which could incite and encourage them. We are, also, left still without a reason why, in well-ordered and religious families, where education and the example, too, is good, so many instances of their inefficacy should occur. If bad education corrupts a naturally well-disposed mind, then a good education ought still more powerfully to affect it, and give it a right tendency. It is allowed, that good example and good education are, in many instances, effectual; but we can account for them, without giving up the doctrine of the natural corruption of the heart. It is, however, impossible for those to account for those failures of both example and instruction which often take place, since, on the hypothesis of man's natural innocence and good disposition, they ought never to occur, or, at least, but in very rare cases, and when some singular counteracting external causes happen to come into operation.

2. We may also ask, how it came to pass, unless there were a predisposing cause to it, that education, as well as example, should have been generally bad? Of education, indeed, men are usually more careful than of example. The lips are often right when the life is wrong; and many practise evil who will not go so far as to teach it. If human nature, then, be born pure, or, at worst, equally disposed to good and evil, then the existence of a generally corrupting system of education, in all countries and among all people, cannot be accounted for. We have an effect either contrary to the assigned cause, or one to which the cause is not adequate—it is the case of a pure fountain sending forth corrupt streams; or that of a stream which, if turbid, has a constant tendency to defecation, and yet becomes still more muddy as it flows along its course.

3. It is not, however, the fact, that education is directly and universally so corrupting a cause as to account for the depravity of mankind. In many instances it has been defective; it has often inculcated false views of interest and honour; it has fostered prejudices and even national, though not social, hatreds; but it has only in few cases been employed to teach those vices into which men have commonly fallen. In fact, education, in all countries, has been, in no small degree, opposed to vice; and, as the majority of the worst people among us would shudder to have their children instructed in the vices which they themselves practise, so in the worst nations of antiquity, the characters of schoolmasters were required to be correct, and many principles and maxims of a virtuous kind were, doubtless, taught to children. When Horace says of youth, "Cereus in vitium flecti, monitoribus asper," he acknowledges its natural tendency to receive vicious impressions, but shows, too, that it was not left without contrary admonition. Precisely in those vices which all education, even the most defective, is designed

to guard against, the world has displayed its depravity most obviously; and thus, so far from education being sufficient to account for the evils which have stained society in all ages, its influence has been, in no small degree, opposed to them.

4. To come to the other facts which must be accounted for, education is placed upon the same ground in the argument as example. The early evil dispositions in children cannot thus be explained, for they appear before education commences; nor does any man refer to education his propensity to constitutional sins; the resistance he often feels to good in his heart; his proneness to forget God, and to be indifferent to spiritual and eternal objects; all these he feels to be opposed to those very principles which his judgment approves, and with which it was furnished by education.

It is only, then, by the Scriptural account of the natural and hereditary corruption of the human race, commonly called original sin, (4) that these facts are fully accounted for; and as the facts themselves cannot be denied, such an interpretation of the Scripture as we have given above is, therefore, abundantly confirmed.

As the fact of a natural inclination to evil cannot be successfully combated, some have taken a milder view of the case; and, allowing these tendencies to various excesses, account for them by their being natural tendencies to what is pleasing, and so, for this reason, they deny them to be sinful, until they are complied with and approved by the will. This appears to be the view of Limborch, and some of the later divines of the Arminian school, who on this and other points very materially departed from the tenets of their master. (*See Limborch's Theologia Christiana*, liber iii, caput 4.) Nothing, however, is gained by this notion, when strictly examined; for, let it be granted that these propensities are to things naturally pleasing, and that, in excess, they are out of their proper order; yet as it happens that, as soon as every person comes to years to know that they are wrong, as being contrary to the Divine law, he yet chooses them, and thus, without dispute, makes them sins; this universal compliance of the *will* with what is known to be evil is also to be accounted for, as well as the natural tendency to sinful gratifications. Now, as we have proved the universality of sin, this universal tendency of the will to choose and sanction the natural propensity to unlawful gratification is the proof of a natural state of mind, not only defective, but corrupt, which is what we contend for. If it be said, that these natural propensities to various evils in children are not sinful before they have the consent of the will, all that can be maintained is, that they are not *actual* sins, which no one asserts; but as a universal choice of evil, when accountableness takes place, proves

(4) The term "original sin" appears to have been first introduced by St. Augustine, in his controversy with the Pelagians.

a universal pravity of the will, previous to the actual choice, then it inevitably follows, that, though infants do not commit actual sin, yet that theirs is a sinful nature.

Finally, the death and sufferings to which children are subject is a proof that all men, from their birth, are "constituted," as the apostle has it, and treated as "sinners." An innocent creature may die; no one disputes that; but to die was not the original law of our species, and the Scriptures refer death solely to sin as its cause. Throughout the sacred writings, too, it is represented as a penalty, as an evil of the highest kind; and it is in vain to find out ingenious reasons to prove it a blessing to mankind. They prove nothing against the directly opposite character which has been stamped upon death and the suffering of moral disease, by the testimony of God. On the hypothesis of man's natural innocence, the death of the innocent is not to be reconciled to any known attribute of God, to any manifested principle of his moral government; but on that of his natural corruptness and federal relation to Adam it is explained: it is a declaration of God's hatred of sin; a proclamation of the purity and inflexibility of his law; while the connection of this state, with the provisions of the covenant of grace, present "mercy and truth meeting together, righteousness and peace kissing each other."

As to that in which original sin consists, some divines and some public formularies have so expressed themselves, that it might be inferred that a positive evil, infection, and taint had been judicially infused into man's nature by God, which has been transmitted to all his posterity. Others, and those the greater number, both of the Calvinist and Arminian schools, have resolved it into privation. This distinction is well stated in the Private Disputations of Arminius.

"But since the tenor of the covenant into which God entered with our first parents was this, that if they continued in the favour and grace of God, by the observance of that precept and others, the gifts which had been conferred upon them should be transmitted to their posterity, by the like Divine grace which they had received; but if they should render themselves unworthy of those favours, through disobedience, that their posterity should likewise be deprived of them, and should be liable to the contrary evils: hence it followed, that all men, who were to be naturally propagated from them, have become obnoxious to death temporal and eternal, and have been destitute of that gift of the Holy Spirit, or of original righteousness. This punishment is usually called a privation of the image of God, and original sin.

"But we allow this point to be made the subject of discussion—beside the want or absence of original righteousness, may not some other contrary quality be constituted, as another part of original sin? We think it is more probable, that this absence alone of original righteousness is

original sin itself, since it alone is sufficient for the commission and production of every actual sin whatever."

This is by some divines called, with great aptness, "a depravation arising from a depravation," and is certainly much more consonant with the Scriptures than the opinion of the infusion of evil qualities into the nature of man by a positive cause, or direct tainting of the heart. This has been, indeed, probably an opinion, in the proper sense, with few, and has rather been collected from the strong and rhetorical expressions under which the moral state of man is often exhibited, and, on this account, has been attacked as a part of the doctrine of original sin, by the advocates of original innocence, and as making God directly the author of sin. No such difficulty, however, accompanies the accurate and guarded statement of that doctrine in the sense of Scripture. The depravation, the perversion, the defect of our nature is to be traced to our birth, so that in our flesh is no good thing, and they that are in the flesh cannot please God; but this state arises not from the infusion of evil into the nature of man by God, but from that separation of man from God, that extinction of spiritual life which was effected by sin, and the consequent and necessary corruption of man's moral nature. For that positive evil and corruption may flow from a mere privation may be illustrated by that which supplies the figure of speech, "death," under which the Scriptures represent the state of mankind. For, as in the death of the body, the mere privation of the principle of life produces inflexibility of the muscles, the extinction of heat, and sense, and motion, and surrenders the body to the operation of an agency which life, as long as it continued, resisted, namely, that of chymical decomposition; so, from the loss of spiritual life, followed estrangement from God, moral inability, the dominion of irregular passions, and the rule of appetite; aversion, in consequence, to restraint; and enmity to God.

This connection of positive evil, as the effect, with privation of the life and image of God, as the cause, is, however, to be well understood and carefully maintained, or otherwise we should fall into a great error on the other side, as, indeed, some have done, who did not perceive that the corruption of man's nature necessarily followed upon the privation referred to. It is, therefore, a just remark of Calvin, that "those who have defined original sin as a privation of the original righteousness, though they comprise the whole of the subject, yet have not used language sufficiently expressive of its operation and influence. For our nature is not only destitute of all good, but is so fertile in all evils, that it cannot remain inactive." (*Institutes.*) Indeed, this privation is not fully expressed by the phrase "the loss of original righteousness," unless that be meant to include in it the only source of righteousness in even the first man, the life which is imparted and supplied by the Holy Spirit. A similar want of explicitness we observe also in Calvin's own

statement in his generally very able chapter on this subject, that Adam lost "the ornaments" he received from his Maker for us as well as for himself; unless we understand by these original "ornaments" and "endowments" of human nature in him, the *principle* also, as above stated, from which they all flowed; and which, being forfeited, could no longer be imparted *in the way of nature*. For when the Spirit was restored to Adam, being pardoned, it was by grace and favour; and he could not impart it by natural descent to his posterity, though born of him when in a state of acceptance with God, since these influences are the gifts of God, which are imparted not by the first but by the second Adam; not by nature, but by a free gift, to sinful and guilty man, the law being irreversible, "that which is born of the flesh is flesh."

Arminius, in the above quotation, has more forcibly and explicitly expressed that privation of which we speak, by the forfeiture "of the gift of the Holy Spirit" by Adam, for himself and his descendants, and the loss of original righteousness as the consequence.

This I take to be at once a simple and a Scriptural view of the case. President Edwards, who well argues against the notion of the infusion of evil, perplexes his subject by his theory of "natural and supernatural principles," which the notes of Dr. Williams, his editor, who has introduced the peculiarities of his system of passive power, have not relieved. So far, certainly, both are right; the latter, that the creature cannot uphold itself, either physically or morally, without God; the former, that our natural passions and appetites can only be controlled by the higher principles, which are "summarily comprehended in Divine love." But the power which upholds the rational creature in spiritual life is the Holy Spirit; and the source of these controlling supernatural powers, comprehended in "Divine," is also the Holy Spirit; from the loss of which all the depravation of man's nature proceeded.

This point may be briefly elucidated. The infliction of spiritual death, which we have already shown to be included in the original sentence, consisted, of course, in the loss of spiritual life, which was that principle from which all right direction and control of the various powers and faculties of man flowed. But this spiritual life in the first man was not a natural effect, that is, an effect which would follow from his mere creation, independent of the vouchsafed influence of the Holy Spirit. This may be inferred from the "new creation," which is the renewal of man after the image of Him who at first created him. This is the work of the Holy Spirit; but even after this change, this being "born again," man is not able to preserve himself in the renewed condition into which he is brought, but by the continuance of the same quickening and aiding influence. No future growth in knowledge and experience; no power of habit, long persevered in, render him independent of the help of the Holy Spirit; he has rather, in proportion to his growth, a deeper

consciousness of his need of the indwelling of God, and of what the apostle calls his "mighty working." The strongest aspirations of this new life is after communion and constant intercourse with God; and as that is the source of new strength, so this renewed strength expresses itself in a "cleaving unto the Lord," with a still more vigorous "purpose of heart." In a word, the sanctity of a Christian is dependent wholly upon the presence of the Sanctifier. We can only work out our own salvation as "God worketh in us to will and to do."

This is the constant language of the New Testament; but if we are restored to what was lost by Adam, through the benefit brought to us by the second Adam; if there be any correspondency between the moral state of the regenerate man, and that of man before his fall, we do not speak of *degree*, but of substantial sameness of kind and quality; if love to God be in us what it was in him; if holiness, in its various branches, as it flows from love, be in us what it was in him; we have sufficient reason to infer, that as they are supported in us by the influence of the Divine Spirit, they were so supported in him. Certain it is, that before we are thus quickened by the Spirit, we are "*dead* in trespasses and sins;" and if we are made alive by that Spirit, it is a strong presumption that the withdrawing of that Spirit from Adam, when he wilfully sinned, and from all his posterity, that is, from human nature itself, was the cause of the death and the depravation which followed.

But this is not left to mere inference. For, as Mr. Howe justly observes, when speaking of "the retraction of God's Spirit from Adam," "This we do not say gratuitously; for do but consider that plain text, Gal. iii, 13, 'Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us; for cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree; that the blessing of Abraham might come upon us Gentiles, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.' If the remission of the curse carry with it the conferring of the grace of the Spirit, then the curse, while it did continue, could not but include and carry in it the privation of the Spirit. This was part of the curse upon apostate Adam, the loss of God's Spirit. As soon as the law was broken, man was cursed, so as that thereby this Spirit should be withheld, should be kept off, otherwise than as upon the Redeemer's account, and according to his methods it should be restored. Hereupon it could not but ensue that the Holy image of God must be erased and vanished." (*Posthumous Works.*)

This accounts for the whole case of man's corruption. The Spirit's influence in him did not prevent the possibility of his sinning, though it afforded sufficient security to him, as long as he looked up to that source of strength. He did sin, and the Spirit retired; and, the tide of sin once turned in, the mound of resistance being removed, it overflowed his whole nature. In this state of alienation from God men are born, with all these tendencies to evil, because the only controlling and sanctifying

power, the presence of the Spirit, is wanting, and is now given to man, not as when first brought into being, as a *creature;* but is secured to him by the mercy and grace of a new and different dispensation, under which the Spirit is *administered* in different degrees, times, and modes, according to the wisdom of God, never on the ground of our being creatures, but as redeemed from the curse of the law by him who became a curse for us.

A question, as to the transmission of this corruption of nature from parents to children, has been debated among those who, nevertheless, admit the fact; some contending that the soul is *ex tradice;* others, that it is by immediate creation. It is certain that, as to the metaphysical part of this question, we can come to no satisfactory conclusion. The Scriptures, however, appear to be more in favour of the doctrine of *traduction.* "Adam begat a son in his own likeness." "That which is born of the flesh is flesh," which refers certainly to the soul as well as to the body. The fact also of certain dispositions and eminent faculties of the mind being often found in families appears to favour this notion; though it may be plausibly said, that, as the mind operates by bodily instruments, there may be a family constitution of the body, as there is of likeness, which may be more favourable to the excitement and exertion of certain faculties than others.

The usual argument against this traduction of the human spirit is, that the doctrine of its generation tends to materialism. But this arises from a mistaken view of that in which the procreation of a human being lies, which does not consist in the production out of nothing of either of the parts of which the compounded being, man, is constituted, but in the uniting them substantially with one another. The matter of the body is not, then, first made, but disposed, nor can it be supposed that the soul is by that act first produced. That belongs to a higher power; and then the only question is, whether all souls were created in Adam, and are transmitted by a law peculiar to themselves, which is always under the control of the will of that same watchful Providence, of whose constant agency in the production and ordering of the kinds, sexes, and circumstances of the animal creation, we have abundant proof; or whether they are immediately created. The usual objection to the last notion is, that God cannot create an evil nature; but if our corruption is the result of privation, not of positive infection, the notion of the immediate creation of the soul is cleared of a great difficulty, though it is not wholly disentangled. But the tenet of the soul's *descent* appears to have most countenance from the language of Scripture, and it is no small confirmation of it, that when God designed to incarnate his own Son, he stepped out of the ordinary course, and formed a sinless human nature immediately by the power of the Holy Ghost. The philosophical difficulties which have presented themselves to this opinion appear chiefly

to have arisen from supposing that consciousness is an essential attribute of spirit; and that the soul is *naturally* immortal; the former of which cannot be proved, while the latter is contradicted by Scripture, which makes our immortality a gift dependent on the will of the giver. Other difficulties have arisen for want of considering the constant agency of God in regulating the production of all things, and of rational accountable creatures especially.

But whichever of these views is adopted, the soul and the body are united before birth, and man is *born* under that curse of the law which has deprived fallen human nature of the Spirit of God, who can only be restored by Christ. It is, therefore, well and forcibly said by Calvin,—"to enable us to understand this subject, (man's birth in sin,) we have no need to enter on that tedious dispute, with which the fathers were not a little perplexed, whether the soul proceeds by derivation. We ought to be satisfied with this, that the Lord deposited with Adam the endowments he chose to confer upon human nature; and, therefore, that when he lost the favours he had received, he lost them not only for himself, but for us all. Who will be solicitous about a transmission of the soul, when he hears, that Adam received the ornaments that he lost no less for us than for himself? that they were given, not to one man only, but to the whole human nature? There is nothing absurd, therefore, if, in consequence of his being spoiled of his dignities, that nature be now destitute and poor." (*Institutes.*)

From this view of the total alienation of the nature of man from God, it does not, however, follow that there should be nothing virtuous and praiseworthy among men, until, in the proper sense, they become the subjects of the regeneration insisted upon in the Gospel as necessary to qualify men for the kingdom of heaven. From the virtues which have existed among heathens, and from men being called upon to repent and believe the Gospel, it has been argued that human nature is not so entirely corrupt and disabled as the above representation would suppose; and, indeed, on the Calvinistic theory, which denies that all men are interested in the benefits procured by the death of Christ, it would be extremely difficult for any to meet this objection, and to maintan their own views of the corruption of man with consistency. On the contrary theory of God's universal love nothing is more easy; because, in consequence of the atonement offered for all, the Holy Spirit is administered to all, and to his secret operations all that is really spiritual and good, in its *principle*, is to be ascribed.

Independent of this influence, indeed, it may be conceived that there may be much restraint of evil, and many acts of external goodness in the world, without at all impugning the doctrine of an entire estrangement of the heart from God, and a moral death in trespasses and sins.

1. The understanding of man is, by its nature, adapted to perceive

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the evidence of demonstrated truth, and has no means of avoiding the conviction but by turning away the attention.—Wherever, then, revelations of the Divine law, or traditional remembrances of it are found, notions of right and wrong have been and must be found also.

2. So much of what is right and wrong is connected with the *interests* of men, that they have been led publicly to approve what is right in all instances, in all instances where it is obviously beneficial to society, and to disapprove of wrong. They do this by public laws, by their writings, and by their censures of offenders. A moral standard of judging of vice and virtue has, therefore, been found every where, though varying in degree; which men have generally honestly applied to others in passing a judgment on their characters, though they have not used the same fidelity to themselves. More or less, therefore, the practice of what is condemned as vice or approved as virtue is shameful or creditable, and the interests and reputation of men require that they obtain what is called *a character*, and preserve it; a circumstance which often serves to restrain vicious practices, and to produce a negative virtue, or an affectation of real and active virtue.

3. Though the seeds of sin lie hid in the heart of all, yet their full developement and manifestation in action can only take place slowly and by the operation of exciting circumstances. Much of the evil in the world, also, lies in the irregularities of those natural appetites and the excesses of those passions which are not in themselves evil, and such corrupt habits cannot be formed until after opportunities of frequent indulgence have been given. This will account for the comparative innocence of infancy, of youth, and of those around whom many guards have been thrown by providential arrangement.

4. We may notice, also, that it is not possible, were all men equally constituted as to their moral nature, that all sins should show themselves in all men; and that although there is nothing in the proper sense, good in any, that society should present an unvarying mass of corruption, which some appear to think a necessary corollary from the doctrine of the universal corruption of human nature. Avarice, the strong desire of getting and of hoarding wealth, necessarily restrains from expensive vices. An obsequious and a tyrannical temper cannot co-exist in the same circumstances, and yet, in other circumstances, the obsequious man is often found to be tyrannical, and the latter obsequious. Certain events excite a latent passion, such as ambition, and it becomes a master passion, to which all others are subordinated, and even vicious dispositions and habits controlled in order to success: just on the same principle that the ancient athletæ (5) and our modern prize-fighters

(5) "Qui studet optatam cursu contingere metam,
Multa tulit fecitque puer; sudavit et alsit;
Abstinuit venere, et vino." (*Horace.*)

abstain from sensual indulgences, in order to qualify themselves for the combat; but who show, by the habits in which they usually live, that particular vices are suspended only under the influence of a stronger passion. Perhaps, too, that love of country, that passion for its glory and aggrandizement, which produced so many splendid actions and characters among the Greeks and Romans, a circumstance which has been urged against the doctrine of man's depravity, may come under this rule. That it was not itself the result of a virtuous state of mind in, at least, the majority of cases, is clear from the frauds, injustice, oppressions, cruelties, and avarice with which it was generally connected.

5. It is a fact, too, which cannot be denied, that men have constitutional evil tendencies, some more powerfully bent to one vice, some to another. Whether it results from a different constitution of the mind that the general corruption should act more powerfully in one direction in this man, and in another in that; or from the temperament of the body; or from some law impressed by God upon a sinful nature, (which it involves no difficulty to admit, inasmuch as society could scarcely have existed without that balance of evils and that check of one vice upon another which this circumstance produces,)—such is the fact; and it gives a reason for the existence of much negative virtue in society.

From all these causes, appearances of good among unregenerate men will present themselves, without affording any ground to deduct any thing from those statements as to man's fallen state which have been just made; but these negative virtues, and these imitations of actions really good from interest, ambition, or honour, have no foundation in the fear of God, in a love to virtue as such, in a right will, or in spiritual affections; and they afford, therefore, no evidence of spiritual life, or, in other words, of religious principle. To other vices, to which there is any temptation, and to those now avoided, whenever the temptation comes, men uniformly yield; and this shows, that though the common corruption varies its aspects, it is, nevertheless, unrelieved by a real virtuous principle in any, *so far as they are left to themselves.*

But virtues grounded on principle, though an imperfect one, and therefore neither negative nor simulated, may also be found among the unregenerate, and have existed, doubtless, in all ages. These, however, are not from man, but from God, whose Holy Spirit has been vouchsafed to "*the world*," through the atonement. This great truth has often been lost sight of in this controversy. Some Calvinists seem to acknowledge it substantially, under the name of "common grace;" others choose rather to refer all appearances of virtue to nature, and thus, by attempting to avoid the doctrine of the gift of the Spirit to all mankind, attribute to nature what is inconsistent with their opinion of its entire corruption. But there is, doubtless, to be sometimes found in men not yet regenerate in the Scripture sense, not even decided in their choice, something

of moral excellence, which cannot be referred to any of the causes above adduced; and of a much higher character than is to be attributed to a nature which, when left to itself, is wholly destitute of spiritual life. Compunction for sin, strong desires to be freed from its tyranny, such a fear of God as preserves them from many evils, charity, kindness, good neighbourhood, general respect for goodness and good men, a lofty sense of honour and justice, and, indeed, as the very command issued to them to repent and believe the Gospel in order to their salvation implies, a power of consideration, prayer, and turning to God, so as to commence that course which, persevered in, would lead on to forgiveness and regeneration. To say that all these are to be attributed to mere nature, is to surrender the argument to the semi-Pelagian, who contends that these are proofs that man is not wholly degenerate. They are to be attributed to the controlling influence of the Holy Spirit; to his incipient workings in the hearts of men; to the warfare which he there maintains, and which has sometimes a partial victory, before the final triumph comes, or when, through the fault of man, through "resisting," "grieving," "vexing," "quenching" that Holy Spirit, that final triumph may never come. It is thus that one part of Scripture is reconciled to another, and both to fact; the declaration of man's total corruption, with the presumption of his power to return to God, to repent, to break off his sins, which all the commands and invitations to him from the Gospel imply: and thus it is that we understand how, especially in Christian countries, where the Spirit is more largely effused, there is so much more general virtue than in others; and in those circles especially, in which Christian education, and the prayers of the pious, and the power of example are applied and exhibited.

The Scriptural proof that the Spirit is given to "*the world*" is obvious and decisive. We have seen that the curse of the law implied a denial of the Spirit; the removal of that curse implies, therefore, the gift of the Spirit, and the benefit must be as large and extensive as the atonement. Hence we find the Spirit's operations spoken of, not only as to the good, but the wicked, in all the three dispensations. In the patriarchal, "the Spirit strove with men;" with the antediluvian race, before and all the time the ark was preparing. The Jews in the wilderness are said to have "vexed his Holy Spirit;" Christ promises to send the Spirit to convince *the world* of sin; and the book of God's Revelations concludes by representing the Spirit as well as the Bride, the Holy Ghost as well as the Church in her ordinances, inviting all to come and take of the water of life freely. All this is the fruit of our redemption and the new relation in which man is placed to God; as a sinner, it is true, still; but a sinner for whom atonement has been made, and who is to be wooed and won to an acceptance of the heavenly mercy. Christ having been made a curse for us, the curse of the law no longer shuts out that Spirit

from us; nor can justice exclaim against this going forth of the Spirit, as it has been beautifully expressed, "to make gentle trials upon the spirits of men;" to inject some beams of light, to inspire contrite emotions, which, if they comply with, may lead on to those more powerful and effectual. If, however, they rebel against them, and oppose their sensual imaginations and desires to the secret promptings of God's Spirit, they ultimately provoke him to withdraw his aid, and they relapse into a state more guilty and dangerous. Again and again they are visited in various ways, in honour of the Redeemer's atonement, and for the manifestation of the long suffering of God. In some the issue is life; in others, an aggravated death; but in most cases this struggle, this "striving with man," this debating with him, this standing between him and death, cannot fail to correct and prevent much evil, to bring into existence some "goodness," though it may be as the morning cloud and the early dew, and to produce civil and social virtues, none of which however, are to be placed to the account of *nature*, nor used to soften our views of its entire alienation from God; but are to be acknowledged as magnifying that *grace* which regards the whole of the sinning race with compassion, and is ever employed in seeking and saving that which is lost.

CHAPTER XIX.

Redemption.—Principles of God's Moral Government.

We have established it as the doctrine of Holy Scripture, that all men are born with a corrupted nature, that from this nature rebellion against the Divine authority universally flows, and that, in consequence, the whole world is, as St. Paul forcibly expresses it, "guilty before God."

Before any issue proceeded from the first pair, they were restored to the Divine favour. Had no method of forgiveness and restoration been established with respect to human offenders, the penalty of death must have been forthwith executed upon them, there being no doubt of the fact of their delinquency, and no reason, in that case, for delaying their punishment; and with, and in them, the human race must have utterly perished. The covenant of pardon and salvation which was made with Adam, did not, however, terminate upon him; but comprehended all his race. This is a point made indubitable by those passages we have already quoted from the Apostle Paul, in which he contrasts the injury which the human race have received from the disobedience of Adam, with the benefit brought to them by the obedience of Jesus Christ. "For if, through the offence of one, many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one

man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many." "Therefore, as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life."

Since, then, the penalty of death was not immediately executed in all its extent upon the first sinning pair, and is not immediately executed upon their sinning descendants; since they were actually restored to the Divine favour, and the same blessing is offered to us, our inquiries must next be directed to the nature and reason of that change in the conduct of the Divine Being, in which he lays aside, in so great a measure, the sternness and inflexibility of his office of Judge, and becomes the dispenser of grace and favour to the guilty themselves.

The existence of a Divine law, obligatory upon man, is not doubted by any who admit the existence and government of God. We have already seen its requirements, its extent, and its sanctions, and have proved that its penalty consists not merely of severe sufferings in this life; but in *death*, that is, the separation of the body and the soul,—the former being left under the power of corruption, the other being separated from God, and made liable to punishment in another state of being.

It is important to keep in view the fact of the extent and severity of the punishment denounced against all transgressions of the law of God, because this is illustrative of the character of God; both with reference to his essential holiness and to his proceedings as Governor of the world. The miseries connected with sin, as consequences affecting the transgressor himself and society, and the afflictions, personal and national, which are the results of Divine *visitation*, must all be regarded as *punitive*. Corrective effects may be secondarily connected with them, but primarily, they must all be punitive. It would be abhorrent to all our notions of the Divine character, to suppose perfectly *innocent* beings subject to such miseries; and they are only, therefore, to be accounted for on the ground of their being the results of a supreme judicial administration, which bears a strict, and often a very terrible character. If, to the sufferings and death which result from offences in the present life, we add the future punishment of the wicked, we shall be the more impressed with the depth and breadth of that impress of justice which marks the character and the government of God. Say that this punishment is that of *loss*, loss of the friendship and presence of God, and all the advantages which must result from that immediate intercourse with him which is promised to righteous persons; and that this loss, which, confessedly, must be unspeakably great, is eternal; even then it must follow that the turpitude of moral delinquency is regarded by our Divine Legislator and Judge as exceedingly mighty and aggravated. But when to the punishment of *loss* in a future life,

we add that of *pain*, which all the representations of this subject in Scripture certainly establish, whether they are held to be expressed in literal or in figurative phrase; to which pain also the all-impressive circumstance of *eternity* is to be added; then is our sense of the guilt and deserving of human offence against God, according to the principles of the Divine law, raised, if not to a full conception of the evil of sin, (for as we cannot measure the punishment, we cannot measure the quality of the offence,) yet to a standard of judging, which may well warrant the Scriptural exclamation, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."

These premises are unquestionable, if any respect is paid to the authority of Scripture, and, indeed, God's severity against moral offence is manifested, as to this present life, by facts of universal observation and uninterrupted history, quite independent of Scripture. But it is to the testimony of God himself, in his own word, that we must resort for the most important illustrations of the Divine character, and especially of its HOLINESS and JUSTICE.

With respect to the former, they show us that HOLINESS in God is more than a mere absence of moral evil; more than approval, and even delight in moral goodness; more than simple aversion and displeasure at what is contrary to it. They prove, that the holiness of God is so *intense*, that whatever is opposed to it is the object of an active displacence, of hatred, of opposition, and resistance, and that this sentiment is inflexible and eternal. Agreeably to this, GOD is, in Scripture, said to be "of purer eyes than to behold iniquity"—and we are taught that "the thoughts of the wicked are an abomination" to him.

With respect to the JUSTICE of God, it is necessary that we should enter into a larger view, since a right conception of that attribute of the Divine nature lies at the foundation of the Christian doctrine of atonement.

Justice is usually considered as universal or particular. Universal justice, or righteousness, includes holiness, and, indeed, comprehends all the moral attributes of God, all the Divine virtues of every kind.—Particular justice is either *commutative*, which respects equals; or *distributive*, which is the dispensing of rewards and punishments, and is exercised only by governors. It is the justice of God in this last view, but still in connection with universal justice, with which we are now concerned; that *rectoral sovereign justice* by which he maintains his own rights, and the rights of others, and gives to every one his due according to that legal constitution which he has himself established. And as this legal constitution under which he has placed his creatures, is the result of universal justice or righteousness, the holiness, goodness, truth, and wisdom of God united; so his distributive justice, or his

respect to the laws which he has himself established, is, in every respect and degree, faultless and perfect. In this legal constitution, no rights are mistaken or misstated; and nothing is enjoined or prohibited, nothing promised or threatened but what is exactly conformable to the universal righteousness or absolute moral perfection of God. This is the constant doctrine of Scripture; this the uniform praise bestowed upon the Divine law, that it is, in every respect, conformable to abstract truth, purity, holiness, and justice, and is itself truth, purity, holiness, and justice. "The statutes of the Lord are RIGHT, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is PURE, enlightening the eyes; the fear of the Lord is CLEAN, enduring for ever; the judgments of the Lord are TRUE and RIGHTEOUS altogether," Psalm xix, 8, 9. "The law is holy, and the commandment HOLY, JUST, and GOOD," Rom. vii, 12.

Of the strictness and severity of the punitive justice of God, the sentence of death, which we have already seen to be pronounced upon "SIN," and, therefore, upon all transgressions of God's law, for "sin is the transgression of the law," is sufficient evidence; and the actual infliction of death, as to the body, is the standing proof to the world, that the threatening is not a dead letter, and that in the Divine administration continual and strict regard is had to the claims and dispensations of distributive justice. On the other hand, as this distributive justice emanates from the entire holiness and moral rectitude of the Divine nature, it is established, by this circumstance, that the severity does not go beyond the equity of the case; and that, to the full extent of that punishment which may be inflicted in another life, and which is, therefore, eternal, there is nothing which is contrary to the full and complete moral perfection of God, to his goodness, holiness, truth, and justice united; but that it is fully agreeable to them all, and is, indeed, the result of the perfect existence of such attributes in the Divine nature.

The Scriptures, therefore, are frequently exceedingly emphatic in ascribing a perfect *righteousness* to the judicial and penal visitations of sinful individuals and nations; and that not merely with reference to such visitations being conformable to the penalties threatened in the Divine law itself, in which case the righteousness would consist in their not exceeding the penalty threatened; but, more abstractedly considered, in their very nature, and with reference to even the highest standard of *righteousness and holiness*. "Shall not the Judge of the whole earth do RIGHT?" "It is a RIGHTEOUS THING with God to RECOMPENSE tribulation to them that trouble you," 2 Thess. i, 6.—"The day of wrath and revelation of the RIGHTEOUS JUDGMENT of GOD," Rom. ii, 5. "Even so, Lord God Almighty, TRUE and RIGHTEOUS are thy judgments," Rev. xvi, 7.

The legal constitution then, which we are under, secures life to the

obedient, but dooms offenders to die. It is the office of distributive justice to execute this penalty, as well as to bestow the reward of obedience; and the appointment of the penalty and the execution of it, are both the results of the essential rectitude of God.

This is most obvious as the doctrine of Scripture; but have we any means of discerning the connection between the essential justice or universal righteousness of God, and such a constitution of law and government as, in the first instance, ordains so severe a penalty against sin as death, maintains it unchangeably through all the generations of time, and carries it into eternity? This is an important question, not without its difficulties, and yet it may not altogether elude our inquiries. Whether we succeed or not in discovering this connection, the fact remains the same, firmly grounded on the most explicit testimony of God in his own word. It is, however, an inquiry worthy our attention.

The creation of beings capable of choice, and endowed with affections, seems necessarily to have involved the possibility of volitions and acts contrary to the will of the Creator, and, consequently, it involved a liability to misery. To prevent this, both justice and benevolence were concerned. Justice, seeing that the Creator has an absolute right to the entire obedience of the creatures he has made, and all opposition to that will is the violation of a *right*, and the practice of a *wrong* which justice is bound to prevent. Benevolence, because this opposition to the will of God, which will is the natural law of a creature, must be the source of misery to the offender, and that independent of direct punishment. This is manifest. Some end was proposed in creation, or it could not have been a work of wisdom; the felicity of the creature must also have been proposed as an end, either principal or subordinate, or creation could not have been a display of goodness; a capacity and power of holiness must also have been imparted to moral agents, or, in a moral nature, every act would have been morally corrupt, and, therefore, the creature must have been constantly displeasing to the holy God, and not "very good," as all his works, including man, were pronounced to be at the beginning. The end proposed in the forming of intelligent creatures could only be answered by their continual compliance with the will of God. This implied both the power and the exercise of holiness, and with that the felicity of the creature was necessarily connected. It was adapted to a certain end, and in attaining that its happiness was secured. To be disobedient was to set itself in opposition to God, to exist and act for ends contrary to the wisdom and holiness of God, and was, therefore, to frustrate his benevolent intentions also as to its happiness, and to become miserable from its very hostility to God, and the disorder arising from the misapplication of the powers with which it had been endowed. To prevent all these evils, and to secure the purposes for which creative power was exerted, were

the ends, therefore, of that administration which arose out of the existence of moral agents. This rule takes date from their earliest being. No sooner did they exist, than a Divine government was established over them; and to the ends just mentioned all its acts must have been directed.

The first act was the publication of the will or law of God, for where there is no declared law there is no rational government. The second act was to give motives to obedience, for to creatures liable to evil, though created good, these were necessary; but as they were made free, and designed to yield a *willing* service, more than motives, that is rational inducements, operating through the judgment and affections, could not be applied to induce obedience;—external force or necessary impulse could have no place in the government of such creatures. The promise of the continuance of a happy and still improving life comprehended one class of motives to obedience; the real justice of yielding obedience another. But was no motive arising from fear also to be applied? There was much to be feared from the very nature of things; from the misery which, in the way of natural and necessary consequence alone, must follow from opposition to the will of God, and the wilful corrupting of a nature created upright. Now, since this was what the creature was liable to, the administration of the Divine government would have been obviously defective, had this been concealed by HIM, who had himself established that natural order, by which disobedience to the will of God, in a moral being, should be followed by certain misery, and he would apparently have been chargeable with not having used every means, consistent with free agency, to prevent so fatal a result. So far we conceive that this is indubitable.

But now let us suppose that nothing less than a positive penalty, of the most tremendous kind, could be a sufficient motive to deter these free and rational beings from transgression; that, even that threatened penalty itself, though the greatest possible evil, would not, in all cases, be sufficient; but that, in none a less powerful motive would prove sufficiently cautionary; then, in such circumstances, the moral perfection of the Divine nature, his universal rectitude and benevolence, would undoubtedly require the ordination of that penalty, however tremendous. The case might be a choice between the universal disobedience of all, and their being left to the miseries which follow from sin by natural consequence; and the preservation of some, perhaps the majority, though the guilty remainder should not only be punished by the misery which is the natural result of vice; but, in addition, should be subject to that positive penalty of death, which, as to the soul, runs on with immortality, and is, therefore, eternal.

On such an alternative as this, which may surely be conceived possible, and which contradicts no attribute of God, does the essential jus-

tice or rectitude of the Divine nature demand that such a penalty should be adopted? The affirmative of this question will be supported, I think, by the following considerations:—

1. The holiness of God, which, as we have seen, is so intense as to abhor and detest every kind and degree of moral evil, would, from its very nature, its active and irreconcilable opposition to evil, determine to the adoption of the most effectual means of preventing its introduction among the rational beings which should be created, and, when introduced, of checking and limiting its progress. So that, in proportion to that aversion, must be his propension to adopt the most effectual means to deter his creatures from it; and if nothing less than such a penalty could be effectual, even in the majority of cases, then it resulted necessarily, from the holiness of God, that the penalty of death, in all its Scriptural extent, should be attached to transgression.

2. The consideration of the essential justice or rectitude of God, that principle which leads to an unchangeable respect to what is *right* and equitably *fit*, leads to the same conclusion. God has his own rights as maker, and, therefore, proprietor and Lord of all creatures, and it is fit they should be maintained and vindicated. To surrender them, or unsteadily and uncertainly to assert them, would be an encouragement to evil, and his very regard to mere abstract right and moral fitness must, therefore, be considered as determining God to a steady and unchangeable assertion of his rights, since their surrender could present no end worthy of his character, or consistent with his holiness. But wherever more created beings exist than one, the rights of others also come into consideration; both the indirect right of a dependent creature under government, to be protected, as far as may be, from the contagion of bad example, and the more direct right of protection from those injuries which many sins do, in their own nature, imply. For no man can be ambitious, unjust, &c, without inflicting injury upon others. The essential rectitude of God was concerned, therefore, to regard these rights in the creatures dependent upon him, and to adopt such a legal constitution and mode of government, under which to place them, as should respect the maintenance of his own rights of sovereignty, and the righteous claims which his creatures, that is the general society of created beings, had upon him. All this, it may be said, only proves that the essential rectitude of God required that such a government should be adopted as should inflict some marked penalty on offences. It proves this, but it proves more, namely, that the Divine rectitude required that the *most effectual* means should be adopted to uphold these rights, both as they existed primarily in God, and secondarily in his creatures. This must follow: for if there was any obligation to uphold them at all, it was an obligation to uphold them in the most effectual manner, since, if ineffectual means only

had been adopted, when more effectual means were at hand, a wilful abandonment of those rights would have been implied. If, therefore, there were no means equally effectual for these purposes as the issuing of a law, accompanied by a sanction of *death* as its penalty, the essential rectitude of God required its adoption.

3. The same may be said of the Divine goodness and wisdom, for, as the former is tenderly disposed to preserve all sentient creatures from misery, so the latter would, of necessity, adopt the most effectual means of counteracting moral evil, which is the only source of misery in the creation of God.

The whole question, then, depends on this, whether the penalty of death, as the punishment of sin, be the most effectual means of accomplishing this end; the answer to which is, to all who believe the Bible, that as this has actually been adopted as the universal penalty of transgressing the Divine law, (see chapter xviii,) and as this is confessedly the highest possible penalty, nothing less than this could be effectual to the purpose of government, and to the manifestation of the Divine holiness and rectitude. If it could, then a superfluous and excessive means has been adopted, for which no reason can be given, and which impeaches the wisdom of God, the office of which attribute it is to adapt means to ends by an exact adjustment; if not, then it was required by all the moral attributes of the Divine nature to which we have referred.

The next question will be whether, since, as the result of the moral perfection of God, a legal constitution has been established among rational creatures which accords life to obedience, and denounces death against transgression, the justice of God *obliges* to the execution of the penalty; or whether we have any reason to conclude, that the rights of God are in many, or in all cases, relaxed, and punishment remitted. All the opponents of the doctrine of atonement strenuously insist upon this; and argue, first, that God has an unquestionable power of giving up his own rights, and pardoning sin on prerogative, without any compensation whatever; second, that when repentance succeeds to offence, there is a moral fitness in forgiveness, since the person offending presents an altered and reformed character; and finally, that the very affections of goodness and mercy, so eminent in the Divine character, require us to conclude that he is always ready, upon repentance, to forgive the delinquencies of all his creatures, or, at most, to make their punishments light and temporary.

In the first of these arguments, it is contended that God may give up his own rights. This must mean either his right to obedience from his creatures, or his right to punish disobedience, when that occurs. With respect to God's right to be obeyed, nothing can be more obvious than that the perfect rectitude of his nature forbids him to give up or to relax that right at all. No king can morally give up his right to be obeyed

in the full degree which may be enjoined by the laws of his kingdom. No parent can give up his right to obedience, in things lawful, from his children, and be blameless. In both cases, if this be done voluntarily, it argues an indifference to that principle of rectitude on which such duties depend, and, therefore, a moral imperfection. Now this cannot be attributed to God, and, therefore, he never can yield up his right to be obeyed, which is both agreeable to abstract rectitude, and is, moreover, for the benefit of the creature himself, as the contrary would be necessarily injurious to him. But may he not give up his right to punish, when disobedience has actually taken place? Only, it is manifest, where he would not appear by this to give up his claim to obedience, which would be a winking at offence; and where he has not absolutely bound himself to punish. But neither of these can occur here. It is only by punitive acts that the Supreme Governor makes it manifest that he stands upon his right to be obeyed, and that he will not relax it. If no punishment ensue, then it must follow, that that right is given up. From the same principle that past offences are regarded with impunity, it would also follow, that all future ones might be overlooked in like manner, and thus government would be abrogated, and the obligation of subjection to God be, in effect, cancelled. If, again, impunity were confined to a few offenders, then would there be partiality in God; if it were extended to all, then would he renounce his sovereignty, and show himself indifferent to that love of rectitude which is the characteristic of a holy being, and to that moral order, which is the character of a righteous governor. But, in addition to this, we have already seen that, by a formal law, punishment is actualy threatened, and that in the extreme, and in all cases of transgression whatever. Now, from this, it follows, that nothing less than the attachment of such a penalty to transgression was determined by the wisdom of God to be sufficient to uphold the authority of his laws among his creatures; that even this security, in all instances, would not deter them from sin; and, therefore, that a less awful sanction would have been wholly inadequate to the case. If so, then not to exact the penalty is to repeal the law, to reduce its sanction to an empty threat, unworthy the veracity of God, and to render it altogether inert, inasmuch as it would be soon discovered whether sin were followed by punishment or not. This is a principle so fully recognized in human governments, that their laws have generally defined the measure of punishment, and the fact being proved, the punishment follows as a thing of course in the regular order of administration. It is true, that a power of pardon is generally lodged with the prince; but the reason of this is, the imperfection which must necessarily cleave to all human institutions, so that there may be circumstances in the offence which the law could not provide against; or there may be an expediency or reason of state which supposes some compromise of strict principle,

some weakness on the part of the sovereign power, some desire to disarm resentment, or to obtain popularity, or to gratify some powerful interest. But these are the exceptions, not the rule; for, in general, the supreme power proceeds calmly and firmly in the exercise of punitive justice, in order to maintain the authority of the laws, and to deter others from offending. Now none of those imperfections, or sinister interests, which interfere to produce these exceptions, can have any place in the Divine government; and, even if it could be proved, that, in some special cases, exceptions might occur in the administration of God, yet this would not meet the case of those who would establish the hope of pardon in behalf of offending men, upon the prerogative of God to relax his own rights and to remit punishment, since what is required is to prove that there is a general rule of pardon, not a few special cases of exemption from the denounced penalty. It may, therefore, be confidently concluded, that there is no relaxation of right in the Divine administration, and no forgiveness of sin by the exercise of mere prerogative.

The notion which has been added to this, that repentance, on the part of the offender, places him in a new relation, and renders him a fit object of pardon, will be found equally fallacious.

This argument assumes that, in a case of impenitence, the moral fitness which is supposed to present itself, in the case of penitents, to claim the exercise of forgiveness, does not exist, and, therefore, that it would be *morally unfit*, that is, *wrong*, to exercise it. This is, indeed, expressly conceded by Socinus, who says, that not to give pardon, in case of impenitence, is due to the rectitude and equity of God. (6) It follows, then, that the principle before stated, that the prerogative of God enables him to forgive sin, must be given up by all who hold that it is only when repentance takes place, that a moral fitness is created for the exercise of this act of grace. Upon their own showing, sin is not, and cannot, consistently with rectitude, be forgiven by a voluntary surrender of right, or from mere compassion; but, in order to make this an act of moral fitness, that is, a right and proper proceeding, some consideration must be presented, independent of the misery to which the offender has exposed himself, and which misery is the object of pity; something which shall make it *right*, as well as *merciful* in God to forgive. Those who urge that repentance is this *consideration*, do thus, unwittingly, give up their own principle, and tacitly adopt that of the satisfactionists differing only as to what does actually constitute it *right* in God to forgive. But the sufficiency of mere repentance to constitute a moral fitness in forgiveness, all who consider the death of Christ as a neces-

(6) "Non resipiscentibus veniam non concedere, id demum naturæ divinæ, et decretis ejus, et propterea rectitudini, et equitati debitum est ac consentaneum." (*Socin. de Servat.*)

sary atonement for sin, do, of course, deny; and there are, indeed, many considerations suggested to us by turning to our true guide, the Scriptures, wholly unfavourable to this opinion.

In the first place, we find no intimation in them that the penalty of the law is not to be executed in case of repentance:—certainly there was none given in the promulgation of the law to Adam; there is none in the decalogue; none in any of those passages in the Old and New Testament which speak of the legal consequences of sin, as "that the wages of sin is death;" "the soul that sinneth it shall die," &c. Repentance is enjoined, both in the Old and New Testaments, it is true, but then it is in connection with a system of atonement and satisfaction, independent of repentance; with sacrifices under the Mosaic institution, and with the death and redemption of Christ under the new covenant. In both, something more is referred to, as the means of human recovery, beside repentance, and of which, indeed, repentance itself is represented as an *effect* and fruit. Wherever the Divine Being and his creatures are regarded simply in their *legal* relation, one as governor, the other as subjects, there is certainly no such qualification of the threatenings of his violated law, as to warrant any one to expect remission of punishment upon repentance.

2. It is not true, that repentance changes, as they urge, the legal relation of the guilty to God whom they have offended. They are offenders still, though penitent. The sentence of the law is directed against transgression, and repentance does not annihilate, but, on the contrary, *acknowledges* the fact of that transgression. The charge lies against the offender; he may be an obdurate or a penitent criminal; but, in either case, he is equally criminal of all for which he stands truly charged, and how then can his relation to the lawgiver be changed by repentance? In the nature of the thing, nothing but pardon can change that relation; for nothing but pardon can cancel crime, and it is clear that repentance is not pardon.

3. So far from repentance producing this change of relation, and placing men in the same situation as though they had never offended, we have proofs to the contrary, both from the Scriptures and from the established course of providence. For the first, though men are now under a dispensation of grace, yet, after long-continued obstinacy and refusal of grace, the Scriptures represent repentance as incapable of turning away the coming vengeance. "Because I have called and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded;—When your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction as a whirlwind, when distress and anguish cometh upon you; then shall they call upon me but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me." Here, to call upon God, and to seek him early, that is, earnestly and carefully, are acts of repentance and reformation too, and

yet they have no effect in changing the relation of the guilty to God, their judge, and they are proceeded against for their past offences, which, according to the theory of the Socinians, they ought not to be. The course of providence in this life, is, also, in opposition to the notion of the efficacy of mere repentance to arrest punishment. For, as Bishop Butler has so well shown, (*Analogy of Natural and Revealed Religion,*) the sufferings which follow sin in this present life by natural consequence and the established constitution of things, are as much the effect of God's appointment as the direct penalties attached by him to the violation of his laws; and though they may differ in degree, that does not affect the question. Whether the punishment be of long or of short duration, inflicted in the present state or in the next, if the justice or benevolence of God requires that punishment should not be inflicted, when repentance has taken place, it cannot be inflicted consistently with those attributes in any degree whatever. But repentance does not prevent these penal consequences—repentance does not restore health injured by intemperance, property wasted by profusion, or character dishonoured by an evil practice. The moral administration under which we are, therefore, shows that indemnity is not necessarily the effect of repentance in the present life, and we have, consequently, no reason to conclude that it will be so in another.

4. The true nature of repentance, as it is stated in the Scriptures, seems entirely to have been overlooked or disregarded by those who contend that repentance is a reason for the non-execution of the penalty of the law. It is either a sorrow for sin, merely because of the painful consequences to which it has exposed the offender, unless forgiven, or it arises from a perception also of the evil of sin, and a dislike to it as such, with real remorse and sorrow, that the authority of God has been slighted, and his goodness abused. Now if, by repentance, is meant repentance in the former sense, then to give pardon on such a condition would be tantamount to the entire and absolute repeal of all law, and the annihilation of all government, since every criminal, when convicted, and finding himself in immediate danger of punishment, would as necessarily repent as he would necessarily be sorry to be liable to pain; and this sorrow being, in that case, repentance, it would in all cases, according to this doctrine, render it morally fit and right that forgiveness should be exercised, and, consequently, wrong that it should be refused. In no case, therefore, could the penalty of the law be, in any degree, enforced.

But if repentance be taken in the second sense, and this is certainly the light in which true repentance is exhibited in the Scriptures, then it is forgotten that such is the corrupt state of man, that he is incapable of penitence of this kind. This follows from that view of human depravity which we have already established from the Scriptures, and

which we need not repeat. In conformity with this view of the entire corruptness of man's nature, therefore, repentance is said to be *the gift* of Christ, who, in consequence of being exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour, "gives repentance," as well as "remission of sins," a gift quite superfluous, if to repent truly were in the power of man, and independent of Christ. To suppose man to be capable of a repentance, which is the result of genuine principle, is to assume human nature to be what it is not. The whole rests on this question: for, if man be *totally* corrupt, the only principles from which that repentance and correction of manners, which are supposed in the argument, can flow, do not exist in his nature; and if we allow no more than that the propensity to evil in him is stronger than the propensity to good, it would be absurd to suppose that in opposing propensities, the weaker should ever resist the more powerful.

But take it that repentance, in the best interpretation, is possible to fallen, unassisted man, and that it is actually exercised and followed even by a better conduct, still in no good sense can it be shown, that this would make it morally *right* and *fit* in the Supreme Being to forgive offences against his government. Socinus, we have seen in the above quotation, allows that it would not be right, not consistent with God's moral attributes to forgive the impenitent; and all, indeed, who urge repentance as the sole condition of pardon, adopt the same principle; but how, then, does it appear that, to grant pardon upon repentance is right, that is, just in itself, or a manifestation of a just and righteous government?

If *right* be taken in the sense of moral fitness, its lowest sense, the moral correspondence of one thing with another, it cannot be morally fit in a perfectly holy being to be so indifferent to offences, as not to express, toward the offenders, any practical displeasure of any kind; yet this the argument supposes, since the slightest infliction of punishment, should repentance take place, would be contrary to the principle assumed. If justice be taken in the sense of giving to every one what is due, the Divine Being cannot be just in this sense, should he treat an offender, though afterward penitent, precisely as he treats those who have persevered in obedience, without defect of any kind; and yet, if repentance be pleaded as a moral reason for entirely overlooking offence, then will all be treated alike, whether obedient or the contrary. But finally, if the justice of God be considered with reference to government, the impossibility of exonerating a penitent offender, and the upholding of a righteous administration is most apparent. That we are under government is certain; that we are under a settled law is equally so, and that law explains to us the nature of the government by which we are controlled. In all the statements made respecting this government in Scripture, the government of earthly sovereigns and magistrates is the shadow under which it is repre-

sented, and the one is the perfect model after which the other has been imperfectly framed. Nothing that is said of God being a father, is ever adduced to lower his claims as Lord, or to diminish the reverence and fear of his creatures toward him under that character. The penalty of transgression is DEATH. This is too plainly written in the Scriptures to be, for a moment, denied, and if it were righteous to attach that penalty to offence, it is most certainly righteous to execute it; and, therefore, administrative justice cannot be maintained if it be not executed. As to the impenitent, this, indeed, is conceded; but penitence makes no difference; for, if the end of attaching this penalty to offence, was to maintain the authority of the law, then not to execute it upon the repentant would still be to annul that authority. This repentance is either in the power of the transgressor, or it is not. If the former, he will always be disposed to exercise it, when the danger approaches, rather than die; and so he may sin as often as he pleases, and yet have it always in his own power to turn aside the punishment, which amounts to a substantive repeal of the law and the abrogation of all government. If, on the other hand, the production of a penitent disposition is not in his own power, and can only come from above, as a matter of grace, it is a strange anomaly to suppose a government so established as to oblige the governor to concur in producing repentance in those who despise his authority, so that they may avoid punishment. This would be *grace*, and not *law*, most emphatically; for, if the governor were bound by any principle of any kind to produce this sentiment of repentance in order to constitute a moral fitness in the exercise of pardon, he would, for any thing we can see, be bound by it, to use the same means to render all penitent, that all might escape punishment, and to do this, too, as often as they fell into sin, that punishment might, in no case, follow, except when the means employed by him for that purpose were obstinately resisted; and thus repentance would be brought in as the substitute of obedience. But since the end of law is to command obedience, and it is invested with authority for the purpose of effecting that, it ceases to answer the purpose for which it was established, when it accepts repentance in the place of obedience. *This is not its end*, as an instrument of moral government; nor is it a means to its proper end, which is *obedience*; for repentance can give no security for future obedience, since a penitent transgressor, whose nature is infected with a corrupt moral principle and habit, is much more liable to sin again than when innocent, as in his first estate; and, as this scheme makes no provision at all for the moral cure of man's fallen nature by the renewing influences of the Holy Spirit, so it abolishes all law as an instrument of moral order, and substitutes pardon as an END of government instead of obedience.

With this view of the insufficiency of repentance to obtain pardon the Scriptures agree; for not, now, to advert to the doctrine of the Old Tes-

tament, which will be subsequently considered, we need only refer to the Gospel, which is professedly a declaration of the mercy of God to sinning men, and which also professedly lays down the means by which the pardon of their offences is to be attained. Without entering at all into other subjects connected with this, it is enough here to show that, in the Gospel, pardon is not connected with *mere repentance*, as it must have been, had the doctrine, against which we have contended, been true. John the Baptist was emphatically a preacher of repentance, and, had nothing but mere repentance been required in order to salvation, he would have been the most successful of preachers. So numerous were the multitudes which submitted to the power of his ministry, that the largest terms are used by the Evangelist Matthew to express the effect produced by it,—"Then went out all Judea, and all Jerusalem, and all the region round about Jordan, and were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins." Of the truth of their repentance, no doubt is expressed. On the contrary, when John excepts only "many of the Sadducees and Pharisees" who came "to his baptism" as hypocrites, we are bound to conclude, that he, who appears to have had the supernatural gift of discovering the spirits of men, allowed the repentance of the rest generally to be genuine. It would follow, then, from the principle laid down by the adversaries of the doctrine of the atonement of Christ, namely, that repentance alone renders it morally fit in God to forgive sin, and that, therefore, he can require nothing else but true repentance in order to pardon, that the disciples of the Baptist needed not to look for any thing beyond what their master was the instrument of imparting by his ministry. But this is contradicted by the fact. He taught them to look for a higher baptism, that of the Holy Ghost; and to a more effectual teacher, the *Christ*, whose voice or herald he was; all he did and said bore upon it a *preparatory* character, and to this character he was most careful to give the utmost distinctness, that his hearers might not be mistaken. To two of his disciples, standing with him when "he looked upon Jesus as he walked," he said, "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world;" and thus he confessed that it was not himself, nor his doctrine, nor the repentance which it produced, which took away sin; but that it was taken away by Christ alone, and that in his sacrificial character, as "the Lamb of God." Nay what, indeed, is still more explicit, he himself declares, that everlasting life was not attained by the repentance which he preached, but by *believing* on Christ; for he concludes his discourse concerning Jesus (John iii, 25, 36) with these memorable words, "He that *believeth* on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." The testimony of John was, therefore, that more than repentance, even faith in Christ, was necessary to salvation. Such also was the doc-

[illegible] himself, though he, too, was a preacher of repent[illegible] the apostles, who, proclaiming that "all men everywhere repent, not less explicitly preached that all men everywhere believe; and that they were "justified by faith," and "[illegible] with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

CHAPTER XX.

Redemption—Death of Christ Propitiatory.

These points, then, being so fully established, that sin is neither pardoned by the mere prerogative of God, nor upon the account of mere repentance in man, we proceed to inquire into the Scripture account of the real consideration on which the execution of the penalty of transgression is delayed, and the offer of forgiveness is made to offenders.

To the statements of the New Testament we shall first direct our attention, and then point out that harmony of doctrine on this subject which pervades the whole Scriptures, and makes both the Old and New Testament give their agreeing testimony to that *one* method of love, mercy, and justice, by which a merciful God justifies the ungodly.

1. The first thing which strikes every attentive, and, indeed, every careless reader of the New Testament, must be, that the pardon of our sins, and our entire salvation, is ascribed to the *death* of Christ. We do not now inquire in what sense his death availed to these great results; we only at present, only state that, in some sense, our salvation is expressly and emphatically connected with that event. "I lay down my life for the sheep." "He gave *himself* for us." He died, "the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God." "Christ was once *offered* to bear the sins of many." "While we were yet sinners Christ *died* for us." "In whom we have redemption through his *blood*, the forgiveness of our sins." "He gave his life a *ransom* for many." "We who were afar off are made nigh by the *blood* of Christ." "Unto him that loved us and washed us from our sins in his own *blood*;" with innumerable other passages, in which, with equal emphasis, the salvation of man is connected with the death of Christ.

This is so undeniable, that it is, to a certain extent, recognized in the most great schemes opposed to that which has been received generally by the Church of Christ, which in all ages has proclaimed that the death of Christ was an expiatory sacrifice for the sins of men, and necessary to make the exercise of pardon consistent with the essential righteousness of God, and with his righteous government. The Socinian scheme admits that the death of Christ was important to confirm his doctrine, and to lead to his resurrection, the crowning miracle by

which its truth was demonstrated; and that we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, because "we are led, by the due consideration of Christ's death, and its consequences, to that repentance, which, under the merciful constitution of the Divine government, always obtains forgiveness." The second scheme, which is that of the modern Arians, goes farther. It represents the coming of Christ, whom they consider to be the most exalted of the creatures of God, into the world, and his labours and sufferings in behalf of men, as acts of the most disinterested and tender benevolence, in reward and honour of which he is allowed to bestow pardon upon his disciples, upon their sincere repentance, and to plead his interest with God, who delights to honour the generous conduct of his Son toward the human race. His voluntary sufferings and death for the sins of mankind, according to them, gave to his intercession with God great efficacy, and thus, by his *mediation*, sinners are reconciled to God, and raised to eternal life.

Far as even the latter of these theories falls below the sense of Scripture on this subject, yet both are, in this respect, important, that they concede that the death of Christ, as the means of human salvation, is made so prominent in the New Testament, that it cannot be left out of our consideration when the doctrine of man's salvation is treated of; and also, that this is a doctrine of the Holy Scriptures which must, in some way or other, be accounted for and explained. The Socinian accounts for it by making the death of Christ *the means by which repentance* is produced in the heart of man, so as to constitute it morally fit that he should be forgiven. The modern Arian accounts for it by connecting with this notion, that kind of *merit* in the death of Christ which arises from a generous and benevolent self devotion; and which, when pleaded by him in the way of mediation, God is pleased to honour by accepting repentance, when it is produced in the heart, and accompanied with purposes of amendment, in place of perfect obedience.

2. But the views given us of the death of Christ, by the writers of the New Testament, go much farther than these, because they represent the death of Christ as *necessary* to the salvation of men, a principle which both the hypotheses just mentioned wholly exclude. The reason of forgiveness is placed by one in repentance merely, by the other, also, in the exercise of the right which God had to pardon, but which he chose to exercise in honour of the philanthropy of Jesus Christ. Both make the death of Christ, though in a different way and in a very subordinate sense, the means of obtaining pardon, because it is a means of bringing men into a state in which they are *fit* objects for the exercise of an act of grace; but the Scripture doctrine is, that the death of Christ is not the meritorious *means*, but the meritorious *cause* of the exercise of forgiveness: and repentance but one of the instrumental

means of actually obtaining it; and, in consistency with this view, they speak of the death of Christ, not as one of many means, by which the same end might have been accomplished; but as, in the strictest sense, *necessary* to man's salvation.

This, has, indeed, been considered, even by some divines professing orthodoxy, to be a bold position, but, as we shall see, with little consistency on their part. It follows, of course, from the Socinian and Arian hypotheses, that if our Lord were a man, or an angelic creature; and if he were rather the mere messenger of a mercy which might be exercised on prerogative, than the procuring cause of it; any other creature beside himself might have conveyed the message of this mercy; might have exhibited a generous devotion in our behalf; and been an effectual instrument to bring men to that repentance which would prepare them to receive it. But when it is admitted, that Christ was the Divine Son of God; that he was "God manifest in the flesh;" that the forgiveness of sin required a satisfaction to Divine justice of so noble and infinitely exalted a kind as that which was offered by the sufferings and death of the incarnate Deity, even from such premises alone it would seem necessarily to follow that, but for the interposition of Christ, sin could not have been forgiven, consistently with a perfectly righteous government, and, therefore, not forgiven at all, unless a sacrifice of equal merit, which supposes a being of equal glory and dignity as its subject, could have been found. If no such being existed out of the Godhead, then human hope rested solely on the voluntary incarnation of the Son of God; and the overwhelming fact and mystery of his becoming flesh, in order to suffer for us, itself shows, that the case to be remedied was one of a character absolutely extreme, and, therefore, not otherwise remediable. If inferior means had been sufficient, then more was done by the Father, when he delivered up his Son for us, than was necessary, a conclusion of an impious character; and if the greatest possible gift was bestowed, then nothing less could have been effectual, and this was *necessary* to human salvation. Every believer in the Divinity of Christ is bound to this conclusion.

This matter is, however, put beyond all reasonable question by the testimony of Scripture. "Thus it is written, and thus it *behooved* Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead." Here a *necessity* for the death of Christ is plainly expressed. If it be said, that the necessity was the fulfilment of what "had been written" in the prophets concerning the sufferings of Messiah, it is to be remembered, that what was predicted on this subject by the prophets arose out of a previous appointment of God, in whose eternal counsel Christ had been designated as the Redeemer of man; and that the sole end and reason of the death of Christ could not, therefore, be the mere fulfilment of the prophecies respecting him. The verse which follows abundantly proves this—

"And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name," Luke xxiv, 47. His death was not only necessary for the accomplishment of prophecy; but for the publication of "repentance and remission of sins in his name," both of which, therefore, depended upon it. It was God's purpose to offer forgiveness to man, before the prophets issued their predictions; it was his purpose to do this in "his name," on account of, and in consideration of his dying for them: this was predicted; but the necessity of the death of Christ rested on this previous appointment to which the prophecies corresponded. In Matthew xvi, 21, the same sentiment is expressed without any reference to the fulfilment of prophecy. "From that time forth began Jesus to show unto his disciples, how that he *must go unto Jerusalem*, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be *killed*, and be raised again the third day." The answer, too, of our Lord to Peter, who, upon this declaration, said, "Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee," is remarkable. "But he turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan; thou art an offence to me; for thou savourest not *the things that be of God*, but those that be of men." These words plainly imply, that for Christ to suffer and die, and in this manner, and not according to the carnal and human views of Peter, to accomplish the purpose of his coming into the world, was "of God;" it was his purpose, his appointment. This is not language to be used as to a martyr dying to prove his sincerity; for death, in such cases, is rather *permitted* than *purposed* and *appointed*, and it would be to adopt language never applied to such cases in the Holy Scriptures, to say that the sufferings and death of martyrs are "of God." The necessity of Christ's death, then, rested on Divine appointment, and that on the necessity of the case; and if he "must" die, in order that we might live, then we live only in consequence of his death.

The same view is conveyed by a strongly figurative expression in John xii, 23, 24: "And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." From which it inevitably follows, that the death of Christ was as necessary to human salvation as the vegetable death of the seed of corn to the production of the harvest; necessary, therefore, in this sense, that one could not take place without the other. But for this he would have remained "alone," and have brought no "sons to glory."

In a word, all those passages of Scripture which speak of our salvation from death and misery by the sufferings of Christ, and call upon our gratitude on this account, are founded upon the same doctrine. These are too numerous to be cited, and are sufficiently familiar. "We have *redemption* through his *blood*;" "we are saved from *wrath*

through him," &c. Such forms of speech are continually occurring, and the highest ascriptions of praise are given to the Father and to the Son on this account. But, most clearly, they all suppose that "wrath" and "death," but for this interposition of the passion of Christ on our account, would have been the doom of sinning men. They contain not the most distant intimation, that had not he come into the world "to seek and to save them that were *lost*," they would have been saved by any other means; that had not he, the good Shepherd, laid down his life for the sheep, they would have been brought by some other process into the heavenly fold. The very emphasis of the expression "lost," implies a desperate case; for as lost they could not have been described, if pardon had been offered them on mere repentance; and if the death of Christ had been one only of many means, through some of which that disposition in God to forgive offenders *must* have operated, which is the doctrine of all who set up the goodness of the Divine government against its justice. In that case, mankind could not have been in a hopeless state, independent of Christ's redemption, the view which is uniformly taken of their case in Scripture, where the death of Christ is exhibited, not as one expedient of many, but as the *only hope* of the guilty.

3. The Scriptures, in speaking of the death of Christ, inform us that he died "FOR us," that is, in our room and stead. With this representation neither of the hypotheses to which we have adverted, as attempting to account for the importance attached to the death of our Lord in the New Testament, agrees, and, therefore, both of them fall far below the whole truth of the case. The Socinian scheme makes the death of Christ only an incidental benefit, as sealing the truth of his doctrine, and setting an example of eminent passive virtue. In this sense, indeed, they acknowledge that he died "*for*" men, because in this indirect manner they derive the benefit of instruction from his death, and because some of the motives to virtue are placed in a stronger light. The modern Arian scheme, sometimes called the intercession hypothesis, acknowledges that he acquired, by his disinterested and generous sufferings, the highest degree of virtue, and a powerful interest with God, by which his intercession, on behalf of penitent offenders, is honoured by an exercise of higher mercy than would otherwise have taken place; but it by no means follows, from this, that repentance might not otherwise have taken place, and mercy have been otherwise exercised. According to this view, then, Christ died for the benefit, indeed, of men, somewhat more directly than on the Socinian scheme; but he did not die for them in the sense of the Scriptures, that is, in their room and stead; his death was not vicarious, and it is not, on that account, *directly*, that the guilty are absolved from condemnation.

To prove that our Lord died *for* men, in the sense of dying in their *stead*, the testimony of the sacred writers must, however, be adduced,

and it is equally abundant and explicit. St. Peter says he died, "the just *for* the unjust," that "he suffered *for* us." St. Paul that "he died *for* all," that "he tasted death *for* every man," that he died "*for* the ungodly," that "he gave himself a ransom for all," and our Lord himself declares "that he gave himself a ransom *for* many." To show, however, that this phrase means no more than a final cause, and that the only notion intended to be conveyed is, that Christ died for our benefit, it is argued, by the objectors, that the Greek prepositions used in the above quotations *υπερ*, and *αντι*, do not always signify substitution; but are sometimes to be rendered "*on account of*," as when Christ is said to have "suffered *for* our sins," which cannot be rendered *instead* of our sins. All this may, indeed, be granted; but then it is as certain, that these prepositions do often signify substitution; and that the Greeks, by these forms of expression, were wont to express a vicarious death, is abundantly proved by the examples given by Raphelius, on Romans v, 8. Nor are instances wanting of texts in which these particles can only be interpreted when taken in the sense of "instead of," and in "the place of." So in the speech of Caiaphas, "it is expedient that one man should die, *υπερ*, for the people, and that the whole nation perish not;" he plainly declares, that either Christ or the nation must perish; and that by putting the former to death, he would die *instead of* the nation. In Romans v, 6–8, the sense in which Christ "died *for* us," is indubitably fixed by the context. "For scarcely for a righteous man will one die, yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die; but God commendeth his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died *for* us;" on which passage Doddridge has observed, "one can hardly imagine any one would die for a good man, unless it were to redeem his life by giving up his own." In this sense also, *αντι* is used by the LXX, 2 Sam. xviii, 33, where David says concerning Absalom, "would to God I had died for thee," (*αντι σου*.) Here he could mean nothing else but to wish that he had died in Absalom's stead. In the sense of "in the room or stead of," *αντι* is also used in many places of the New Testament; as, "Archelaus did reign in Judea (*αντι*) in the room of his father Herod:" "if he ask a fish, will he (*αντι*) for a fish, in place or instead of a fish, give him a serpent." When, therefore, the same preposition is used, Mark x, 45, "The Son of man came to give his life a ransom for (*αντι*) many," there can surely be no reason drawn from the meaning of the particle itself to prevent its being so understood. That it may be so taken is certain, for this is a sense of the preposition constantly occurring; and if that sense is rejected and another chosen, the reason must be brought from the contrariety of the doctrine which it conveys to some other; whereas not one passage is even pretended to be produced, which denies that Christ did thus die in the stead of the ungodly, and give his life a ran-

som in the place or stead of the lives of many. The particles υπερ and αντι have other senses: this is not denied; but, as Bishop Stillingfleet has observed, "a substitution could not be more properly expressed than it is in Scripture by them."

The force of this has, at all times, been felt by the Socinians, and has rendered it necessary for them to resort to subterfuges. Socinus acknowledges, and after him Crellius, that, "when redemption is spoken of, αντι implies *commutation*," but they attempt to escape, by considering both the redemption and the commutation metaphorical. Dr. Priestley, too, admits the probability of the interpretation of Christ's dying *for* us, being to die *instead of us*, and then contends that he did this *consequentially* and not *directly* so, "as a substitute for us; for if, in consequence of Christ's not having been sent to instruct and reform the world, mankind had continued unreformed, and if the necessary consequence of Christ's coming was his death, by whatever means, and in whatever manner it was brought about; it is plain that there was, in fact, no other alternative *but his death or ours*." (*History of Corruptions, &c.*) Thus, under the force of the doctrine of the New Testament, that Christ died in our stead, he admits the *absolute necessity* of the death of Christ, in order to human salvation, contrary to all the principles he elsewhere lays down, and in refutation of his own objections and those of his followers to the orthodox view of the death of our Saviour as being the *only means* by which mercy could be dispensed to mankind. But that Christ died for us directly as a *substitute*, which is still the point denied, is to be fully proved from those scriptures, in which he is said to have *borne the punishment due to our offences;* and this being established, it puts an entire end to all quibbling on the import of the Greek prepositions.

To prove this, the passages of Holy Writ are exceedingly numerous; but it will be more satisfactory to select a few, and point out their force, than to give a long list of citations.

Grotius (*De Satisfactione,*) thus clearly proves that the Scriptures represent our sins as the *impulsive* cause of the death of Christ:—

"Another cause which moved God was our sins, which deserve punishment. Christ was delivered for our offences, Rom. iv, 25. Here the apostle uses the preposition δια with the accusative case, which with all Greek authors, sacred and profane, is the most usual manner of expressing an impulsive cause. For instance, δια ταυτα, 'because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience,' Eph. v, 6. Indeed, whenever the expression, because of sins, is coupled with the mention of sufferings, it never admits of any other interpretation. 'I will chastise you seven times because of your sins,' Lev. xxvi, 28. 'Because of these abominations the Lord God cast them out from his sight,' Deut. xviii, 12. So it is used in many other places of the

sacred writings, and nowhere in a different sense. The expression, for sins, is also evidently of the same force, whenever it is connected with sufferings, as in the example following: 'Christ died for our sins,' 1 Cor. xv, 3. 'Christ hath once suffered for sins,' 1 Peter iii, 18. 'Christ gave himself for our sins,' Gal. i, 4. 'Christ offered one sacrifice for sins,' Heb. x, 12. In all which places we have either υπερ or περι with the genitive case. But Socinus maintains, that in all these places a final and not an impulsive cause is intended. He even goes so far as to assert, that the Latin *pro* and the Greek υπερ never denote an impulsive, but always a final cause. Many examples prove the latter assertion to be untrue. For both υπερ and περι are used to signify no less an impulsive than a final cause. The Gentiles are said to praise God υπερ ελεως for his mercy, Rom. xv, 9. Paul says thanks are given υπερ ημων for us, Eph. i, 16. And υπερ παντων for all; Eph. v, 20. 'We pray you,' υπερ χριστου, for Christ, 2 Cor. v, 20. 'Great is my glorying for you, υπερ υμων, 2 Cor. vii, 4, ix, 2, and xii, 5. 'Distresses (υπερ χριστυ) for Christ,' 2 Cor. xii, 10. 'I thank God (υπερ υμων) for you,' 1 Cor. i, 4. 'God shall reprove all the ungodly (περι παντων εργων ασεβειας) for all their works of ungodliness,' Jude 15. In the same manner, the Latins say, to give or render thanks (pro beneficiis) for benefits, as often in Cicero. He also says, 'to take vengeance (pro injuriis) for injuries;' 'to suffer punishment (pro magnitudine sceleris) for the greatness of a crime;' to fear torments (pro maleficiis) for evil deeds. Plautus, 'to chastise (pro commerita noxia) for faults which deserve it.' And Terence, 'to take vengeance (pro dictis et factis) for words and deeds.' Certainly, in all these places, *pro* does not signify a final, but an impulsive cause. So, when Christ is said to have suffered and died *for* sins, the subject will not allow us, as Socinus wishes, to understand a final cause. Hence, also, as the Hebrew particle מן denotes an antecedent or impulsive cause, (see Psalm xxxviii, 9, and many other places,) the words of Isaiah liii, cannot be better translated, or more agreeably with other scriptures, than He was wounded *on account* of our transgressions; he was bruised on account of our iniquities. And what can Romans vi, 10, τη αμαρτια απεθανεν, denote, but that he died on account of sin?"

Crellius, who attempted an answer to Grotius, at length acknowledges sin to have been an impulsive cause of the death of Christ; but neutralizes the admission by sophistry, on which Bishop Stillingfleet has well observed, that we understand not an impulsive cause in so remote a sense, as though our sins were an occasion of Christ's dying, so that his death was one argument among many others, to believe his doctrine, the belief of which would cause men to leave their sins; but we contend for a nearer and more proper sense, that the death of Christ was primarily intended for the *expiation* of sins, with respect to God, and not to us, and that our sins, as an impulsive cause, are to be considered

as so displeasing to God, that it was necessary, for the vindication of honour and the deterring the world from sin, that no less a sacrifice of atonement should be offered than the blood of the Son of God. The sufferings of Christ, when considered with respect to our sins, are to be considered as a *punishment;* when with respect to God, as being designed to *expiate* them as a sacrifice of atonement.

It is thus that Christ is said to bear our sins. "Who his ownself bare our sins in his own body on the tree," 1 Peter ii, 24, where the apostle evidently quotes from Isaiah liii. "He shall bear their iniquities." "He bore the sin of many." The same expression is used by St. Paul, Heb. ix, 28, "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many." Now to bear sin is, in the language of Scripture, to bear the punishment of sin, Levit. xxii, 9; Ezekiel xviii, 20, and the use of the compound verb αναφερω, by both apostles, is worthy of notice. St. Peter "might have said simply ηνεγκε, *he bore;* but wishing at the same time to signify his being lifted up on the cross, he said ανηνεγκε, he *bore up*, meaning, he bore by going up to the cross." (*Grotius.*) St. Paul, too, uses the same verb with reference to the Levitical sacrifices, which were carried to an elevated altar; and to the sacrifice of Christ. Socinus and his followers cannot deny that to bear sin, in Scripture generally, signifies to bear the punishment of sin; but, availing themselves of the very force of the compound verb αναφερω, just pointed out, they interpret the passage in St. Peter to signify the bearing up, that is, the bearing or carrying away of our sins, which, according to them, may be effected in many other ways than by a vicarious sacrifice. To this, Grotius replies, "The particle ανα will not admit of such a sense, nor is the word ever so used by any Greek writer. In the New Testament it never occurs in such a meaning." It is also decisive as to the sense in which St. Peter uses the phrase to bear sin, that he quotes from Isa. liii, 11, "For he shall bear their iniquities," where the Hebrew word, by the confession of all, is never used for taking away, but for bearing a burden, and is employed to express the punishment of sin, as in Lamentations v, 7, "Our fathers have sinned, and are not, and we have *borne their iniquities.*"

Similar to this expression of bearing sins, and equally impracticable to the criticism of the Socinians, is the declaration of Isaiah in the same chapter, "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities;" and then to show in what sense he was wounded and bruised *for* our transgressions, he adds, "the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed." Now, chastisement is the punishment of a fault; but the suffering person, of whom the prophet speaks, is declared by him to be wholly free from transgression; to be perfectly and emphatically innocent. This prophecy is applied to Christ by the apostles, whose constant doctrine is the entire

immaculateness of their Master and Lord. If chastisement, therefore, was laid upon Christ, it could not be on account of faults of his own; his sufferings were the chastisement of our faults, the price of our peace, and his "stripes," another punitive expression, were borne by him for our "healing." The only course which Socinus and his followers have taken, to endeavour to escape the force of this passage, is to render the word not chastisement, but affliction; in answer to which, Grotius and subsequent critics have abundantly proved that it is used not to signify affliction of any kind; but that which has the nature of *punishment*. These passages, therefore, prove a *substitution, a suffering in our stead*. The chastisement of offences was laid upon him, in order to our peace; and the offences were ours, since they could not be his "who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth."

The same view is presented to us under another, and even still more forcible phrase, in the 6th and 7th verses of the same chapter. "All we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on him [literally, hath made to meet on him] the iniquity of us all; he was oppressed and he was afflicted." Bishop Lowth translates this passage, "and the Lord hath made to light upon him the iniquity of us all; it was exacted, and he was made answerable." In a similar manner, several former critics, (*Vide Poli Synop.*,) "he put or fixed together upon him the iniquity of us all; it was exacted, and he was afflicted." This sense is fully established by Grotius against Socinus, and by Bishop Stillingfleet against Crellius, and thus the passage is obviously incapable of explanation, except by allowing the sufferings and death of our Lord to be vicarious. Our iniquities, that is, according to the Hebrew mode of speaking, their punishment, are made to meet upon him; they are fixed together and laid upon him; the penalty is *exacted* from him, though he himself had incurred no penalty personally, and, therefore, it was in consequence of that vicarious exaction that he was "afflicted," was "made answerable," and, voluntarily submitting, "he opened not his mouth."

In 2 Cor. v, 21, the apostle uses almost the same language. "For he hath made him to be sin [a sin offering] for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." The Socinian Improved Version has a note on this passage so obscure that the point is evidently given up in despair. Socinus before had attempted an elusive interpretation, which requires scarcely an effort to refute. By Christ's being made "sin," he would understand being esteemed a sinner by men. But, as Grotius observes, (*De Satisfactione*,) neither is the Greek word, translated sin, nor the Hebrew word, answering to it, ever taken in such a sense. Beside, the apostle has attributed this act to God; it was he who made him to be sin; but he certainly did not cause the Jews and others to esteem Christ a wicked man. On the

contrary, by a voice from heaven, and by miracles, he did all that was proper to prove to all men his innocence. Farther, St. Paul places "sin" and "righteousness" in opposition to each other—"we are made the righteousness of GOD," that is, are justified and freed from Divine punishment; but, in order to this, Christ was "made sin," or bore our punishment. There is also another antithesis in the apostle's words—God made him who knew no sin, and consequently deserved no punishment, to be sin; that is, it pleased him that he should be punished; but Christ was innocent, not only according to human laws, but according to the law of GOD; the antithesis, therefore, requires us to understand, that he bore the penalty of that law, and that he bore it in our stead.

How explicitly the death of Christ is represented in the New Testament as *penal*, which it could not be in any other way than by his taking our place, and suffering in our stead, is manifest also from Gal. iii, 13, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse [an execration] for us, for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." The passage in Moses, to which St. Paul refers, is Deut. xxi, 22, 23: "If a man have committed a sin worthy of death, and be put to death, and they hang him on a tree; his body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but thou shalt in any wise bury him that day, *for he that is hanged is accursed of God*, that thy land be not defiled." This infamy was only inflicted upon great offenders, and was designed to show the light in which the person, thus exposed, was viewed by GOD,—he was a curse or execration. On this the remarks of Grotius are most forcible and conclusive:—"Socinus says, that to be an execration means to be under the punishment of execration, which is true. For κατάρα every where denotes punishment proceeding from the sanction of law, 2 Peter ii, 14; Mark xxv, 41. Socinus also admits, that the cross of Christ was this curse; his cross, therefore, had the nature of punishment, which is what we maintain. Perhaps Socinus allows that the cross of Christ was a punishment, because Pilate, as a judge, inflicted it; but this does not come up to the intention of the apostle; for, in order to prove that Christ was made obnoxious to punishment, he cites Moses, who expressly asserts, that whoever hangs on a tree, according to the Divine law, is 'accursed of God,'—consequently, in the words of the apostle, who cites this place of Moses, and refers it to Christ, we must supply the same circumstance, 'accursed of God,' as if he had said Christ was made accursed of God, or obnoxious to the highest and most ignominious punishment 'for us, that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles,' &c. For when the apostles speak of the sufferings of Christ in reference to our good, they do not regard the *acts of men* in them, but the act of GOD." (*De Satisfactione.*)

4. We are carried still farther into the real nature and design of the

death of Christ, by those passages of Holy Scripture which connect with it *propitiation*, *atonement*, *reconciliation*, and the making *peace* between God and man; and the more attentively these are considered, the more unfounded will the Socinian notion appear, which represents the death of Christ as, indirectly only, a benefit to us, and as saving us from our sins and their punishment only as it is a motive to repentance and virtue.

To propitiate is to appease, to atone, to turn away the wrath of an offended person. In the case before us the wrath turned away is the wrath of God; the person making the propitiation is Christ; the propitiating offering or sacrifice is his blood. All this is expressed, in most explicit terms, in the following passages: 1 John ii, 2, "And he is the *propitiation* for our sins." 1 John iv, 10, "Herein is love, not that we loved God; but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the *propitiation* for our sins." Rom. iii, 25, "Whom God hath set forth to be a *propitiation* through faith *in his blood*." The word used in the two former passages is ιλασμος; in the last ιλαστηριον. Both are from the verb ιλασκω, so often used by Greek writers to express the action of a person, who, in some appointed way, turned away the wrath of a deity; and, therefore, cannot bear the sense which Socinus would put upon it,—the destruction of sin. This is not supported by a single example: with all Greek authorities, whether poets, historians, or others, the word means to *propitiate*, and is, for the most part, construed with an accusative case, designating the person whose displeasure is averted. (*Grotius De Satisfactione.*) As this could not be denied, Crellius comes to the aid of Socinus, and contends that the sense of this word was not to be taken from its common use in the Greek tongue; but from the Hellenistic use of it, namely, its use in the Greek of the New Testament, the LXX, and the Apocrypha. But this will not serve him; for, both by the LXX and in the Apocrypha it is used in the same sense as in the Greek classic writers. Ezekiel xliv, 27, "He shall offer his *sin offering*, (ιλασμον,) saith the Lord God;" Ezekiel xlv, 19, "And the priest shall take of blood of the sin offering, εξιλασμυ." Num. v, 8, "The ram of the *atonement*," κριος τυ ιλασμυ; to which may be added, out of the Apocrypha, 2 Maccabees iii, 33, "Now as the high priest was making an *atonement*," ιλασμον. The propitiatory sense of the word ιλασμος being thus fixed, the modern Socinians have conceded, in their note on John ii, 2, in their Improved Version, that it means "the pacifying of an offended party;" but they subjoin that Christ is a propitiation, because "by his Gospel he brings sinners to repentance, and thus averts the Divine displeasure.' The concession is important; and the comment cannot weaken it, because of its absurdity; for, in that interpretation of propitiation, Moses, or any of the apostles, or any minister of the Gospel now who succeeds in bringing sinners to repentance, is as

truly a propitiation for sin as Christ himself. On Rom. iii, 25, however, the authors of the Improved Version continue to follow their master Socinus, and translate the passage, "whom God hath set forth a propitiation, through faith in his blood." "whom God hath set forth *as* a mercy seat, in his own blood;" and lay great stress upon this rendering, as removing "that countenance to the doctrine of atonement by vicarious sufferings," which the common translation affords. The word ἱλαστηριον is used in the Septuagint version, and in the Epistle to the Hebrews, to express the mercy seat or covering of the ark. But so little is to be gained by taking it in this sense in this passage, that this rendering is adopted by several orthodox commentators as expressing, by a figure, or rather by supplying a type to the antitype, in a very emphatic manner, the doctrine of our Lord's atonement. The mercy seat was so called, because, under the Old Testament, it was the place where the high priest, on the feast of expiation, sprinkled the blood of the sin offerings, in order to make an atonement for himself and the whole congregation; and, since God accepted the offering which was then made, it is, for this reason, accounted the medium through which God showed himself propitious to the people. With reference to this, Jesus Christ may be called a *mercy seat*, as being the person in or through whom God shows himself propitious to mankind. And as, under the law, God was propitious to those who came to him by appearing before his mercy seat with the blood of their sin offerings; so, under the Gospel dispensation, he is propitious to those who come unto him by Jesus Christ, through faith in that blood which is elsewhere called "*the blood of sprinkling*," which he shed for the remission of sins. Some able critics have, however, argued, from the force of the context, that the word ought to be taken actively, and not merely declaratively; not as "a *propitiatory*," but as a "*propitiation*," which, says Grotius, "is shown by the mention which is afterward made of blood, to which the power of propitiation is ascribed." Others supply θυμα, or ιερειον, and render it expiatory sacrifice. (*Vide Elsner Obs. Schleusner sub voce.*) But, whichever of these renderings be adopted, the same doctrine is held forth to us. The covering of the ark was rendered a propitiatory only by the blood of the victims sprinkled before and upon it; and when the apostle says, that God hath set forth Jesus Christ to be a propitiatory, he immediately adds, having the ceremonies of the temple in his view, "through faith in his *blood*." The text, therefore, contains no exhibition of any means of obtaining mercy but through *the blood of sacrifice*, according to the rule laid down in the Epistle to the Hebrews, "without shedding of blood there is no remission;" and is in strict accordance with Ephesians i, 7, "We have redemption *through his blood*, the remission of sins." It is only by his blood that Christ himself reconciles us to God.

Unable, then, as they who deny the vicarious nature of the sufferings of Christ, are to evade the testimony of the above passages which speak of our Lord as a propitiation, what is their next resource? They deny the existence of wrath in God, in the hope of proving that propitiation, in a *proper sense*, cannot be the doctrine of Scripture, whatever may be the force of the mere *terms* which the sacred writers employ. In order to give plausibility to their statement, they pervert and caricature the opinion of the orthodox, and argue as though it formed a part of the doctrine of Christ's propitiation and oblation for sin, that God is naturally an implacable and vengeful being, only made placable and disposed to show mercy by satisfaction being made to his displeasure through our Lord's sufferings and death. This is as contrary to Scripture as it is to the opinions of all sober persons who hold the doctrine of Christ's atonement. God is love; but it is not necessary in order to support this truth, to assume that he is nothing else. He has, as we have seen, other attributes, which harmonize with this and with each other, though assuredly that harmony cannot be exhibited by any who deny the propitiation for sin made by the death of Christ. Their system, therefore, obliges them to deny the existence of some of the attributes of God, or to explain them away.

It is sufficient to show that there is not only no implacability in God, but a most tender and placable affection toward the sinning human race itself, that the Son of God, by whom the propitiation was made, was the free gift of the Father to us. This is the most eminent proof of his love, that for our sakes, and that mercy might be extended to us, "he spared not his own Son; but delivered him up freely for us all." Thus he is the *fountain* and first moving cause of that scheme of recovery and salvation, which the incarnation and death of our Lord brought into full and efficient operation. The question, indeed, is not whether God is love, or whether he is of a placable nature; in that we are agreed; but it is, whether GOD is holy and just; whether we, his creatures, are under law or not; whether this law has any penalty, and whether GOD, in his rectoral character, is bound to execute and uphold that law. These are points which have already been established, and as the justice of God is punitive, (for if it is not punitive, his laws are a dead letter,) then is there *wrath* in God; then is God *angry* with the wicked; then is man, as a sinner, obnoxious to this *anger;* and so a propitiation becomes necessary to turn it away from him. Nor are these terms unscriptural; they are used in the New Testament as emphatically as in the Old, though in a special sense, a revelation of the mercy of God to man. John the Baptist declares that, if any man believeth not on the Son of God, "the *wrath of God* abideth upon him." St. Paul declares, that "the *wrath of God* is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men." The day of judgment is,

with reference to the ungodly, said to be "the day of *wrath*;" God is called "a *consuming fire*;" and as such, is the object of "reverence and godly fear." Nor is this his displeasure light, and the consequences of it a trifling and temporary inconvenience. When we only regard the consequences which have followed sin in society, from the earliest ages, and in every part of the world, and add to these the many direct and fearful inflictions of punishment which have proceeded from the "Judge of the whole earth," to use the language of Scripture, "our flesh may well tremble because of his judgments." But when we look at the future state of the wicked, as it is represented in Scripture, though expressed generally, and surrounded as it is with the mystery of a world, and a condition of being, unknown to us in the present state, all evils which history has crowded into the lot of man appear insignificant in comparison of banishment from God—separation from the good—public condemnation—torment of spirit—"weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth"—"everlasting destruction"—"everlasting fire." Let men talk ever so much, and eloquently, of the pure benevolence of God, they cannot abolish the facts recorded in the history of human suffering in this world as the effect of transgression; nor can they discharge these fearful communications from the pages of the book of God. They cannot be criticised away; and if it is "Jesus who saves us from this wrath to come," that is, from those effects of the wrath of God which are to come, then, but for him, we should have been liable to them. That principle in God, from which such effects follow, the Scriptures call wrath; and they who deny the existence of wrath in God, deny, therefore, the Scriptures.

It by no means follows, however, that those who thus bow to inspired authority, must interpret wrath to be a *passion* in God; or that, though we conclude the awful attribute of his justice to require satisfaction, in order to the forgiveness of the guilty, we afford reason to any to charge us with attributing vengeful affections to the Divine Being. "Our adversaries," says Bishop Stillingfleet, "first make opinions for us, and then show that they are unreasonable. They first suppose that anger in God is to be considered as a passion, and that passion a desire of revenge, and then tell us, that if we do not prove that this desire of revenge can be satisfied by the sufferings of Christ, then we can never prove the doctrine of satisfaction to be true; whereas we do not mean, by God's anger, any such passion, but the just declaration of God's will to punish, upon our provocation of him by our sins; we do not make the design of the satisfaction to be that God may please himself in the revenging the sins of the guilty upon the most innocent person, because we make the design of punishment not to be the satisfaction of anger as a desire of revenge, but to be the vindication of the honour and rights of the offended person by such a way as he himself

shall judge satisfactory to the ends of his government." (*Discourse on the Sufferings of Christ.*)

This is a sufficient answer; and we now proceed with those passages of Scripture, the phraseology of which still farther establishes the doctrine of Christ's atonement. To those, in which Christ is called a propitiation, we add those which speak of *reconciliation* and the establishment of *peace* between God and man as the design and direct effect of his death. So Col. i, 19, 22, "For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell, and having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to *reconcile* all things unto himself; by him I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven; and you that were some time alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he *reconciled*, in the body of his flesh through *death*." Romans v, 10, 11, "For if when we were enemies, we were *reconciled* to God, by the death of his Son, much more, being *reconciled*, we shall be saved by his life. And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the *atonement*." 2 Cor. v, 18, 19, "And all things are of God, who hath *reconciled* us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation." The verbs translated to reconcile are καταλλασσω and αποκαταλλασσω, which signify a change from one state to another; but, in these passages, the connection determines the nature of the change to be a change from enmity to friendship. In Rom. v, 11, the noun καταλλαγη is rendered, in our translation, *atonement;* but it is contended, that it ought to have been rendered *reconciliation*, unless we admit the primitive meaning of the English word atonement, which is being *at one*, to be affixed to it. It was not in this sense certainly that the word atonement was used by the translators, and it is now fixed in its meaning, and, in common language, signifies *propitiation* in the proper and sacrificial sense. It is not, however, at all necessary to stand upon the rendering of καταλλαγη in this passage by the term atonement. We lose nothing, as we shall see, and the Socinians gain nothing by rendering it reconciliation, which, indeed, appears more agreeable to the context. The word atonement would have been a proper substitute for "*propitiation*" in those passages of the New Testament in which it occurs, as being more obvious in its meaning to the common reader; and because the original word answers to the Hebrew כפר, which is used for the legal atonements; "but as the *reconciliation* which we have received through Christ was the effect of *atonement* made for us by his death, words which denote the former simply, as καταλλαγη, and words from the same root, may, when applied to the sacrifice of Christ, be not unfitly expressed by the latter, as containing in them its full import." (*Magee's Discourses.*) We may observe, also, that if, as it is contended, we must render Romans v, 11, "by whom we have received the *reconciliation*,"

the preceding verse must not be overlooked, which declares "when we were enemies we were reconciled to God, by *the death of his Son*," which death we have just seen is in other passages called a "*propitiation*" or "*atonement*;" and so the apostle conveys no other idea by the term reconciliation, than reconciliation through an atonement.

The expressions "reconciliation" and "making peace," necessarily suppose a previous state of hostility between God and man, which is reciprocal. This is sometimes called enmity, a term as it respects God, rather unfortunate, since enmity is almost fixed in our language to signify a malignant and revengeful feeling. Of this, the oppugners of the doctrine of the atonement have availed themselves to argue, that as there can be no such affection in the Divine nature, therefore, reconciliation in Scripture does not mean the reconciliation of God to man, but of man to God, whose enmity the example and teaching of Christ they tell us are very effectual to subdue. It is, indeed, a sad and humbling truth, and one which the Socinians in their discussions on the natural innocence of man are not willing to admit, that by the infection of sin "the carnal mind is enmity to GOD," that human nature is malignantly hostile to God, and to the control of his law; but this is far from expressing the whole of that relation of man, in which, in Scripture he is said to be at enmity with GOD, and so to need a reconciliation,—the making of peace between God and him. That relation is a legal one, as that of a sovereign in his judicial capacity and a criminal who has violated his laws, and risen up against his authority, and who is, therefore, treated as an enemy. The word εχθρος is used in this passive sense, both in the Greek writers and in the New Testament. So, in Romans xi, 28, the Jews rejected and punished for refusing the Gospel are said by the apostle, "as concerning the Gospel" to be "enemies for your sakes;" treated and accounted such; "but, as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes." In the same epistle, chap. v, 10, the term is used precisely in the same sense, and that with reference to the "reconciliation" by Christ,—"for if when we were *enemies* we were *reconciled* to God by the death of his Son,"—that is, when we were objects of the Divine judicial displeasure, accounted as enemies, and liable to be capitally treated as such. Enmity, in the sense of malignity and the sentiment of hatred, is added to this relation in the case of man; but it is no part of the relation itself; it is rather a cause of it, as it is one of the actings of a corrupt nature which render man obnoxious to the displeasure and the penalty of the law of God, and place him in the condition of an enemy. It is this judicial variance and opposition between God and man, which is referred to in the term "reconciliation," and in the phrase "making peace," in the New Testament; and the hostility is, therefore, in its own nature *mutual*.

But that there is no truth in the notion just refuted, viz. that recon-

ciliation means no more than our laying aside our enmity to God, may also be shown from several express passages. The first is the passage we have above cited, Romans v, 11, "For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God." Here the act of reconciling is ascribed to God and not to us; but if this reconciliation consisted in the laying aside our own enmity, the act would be ours alone; and, farther, that it could not be the laying aside of our enmity, is clear from the text, which speaks of reconciliation while we were yet enemies. "The reconciliation spoken of here, is not, as Socinus and his followers have said, our *conversion*. For that the apostle is speaking of a benefit obtained for us previous to our conversion, appears evident from the opposite members of the two sentences. That of the former runs thus: 'much more being justified, we shall be saved from wrath through him,' and that of the latter, 'much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.' The apostle argues from the greater to the less. If God were so benign to us before our conversion, what may we not expect from him now we are converted? To reconcile here cannot mean to convert; for the apostle evidently speaks of something greatly remarkable in the act of Christ; but to convert sinners is nothing remarkable, since none but sinners can be ever converted; whereas it was a rare and singular thing for Christ to die for sinners, and to reconcile sinners to God by his death, when there have been but very few good men, who have died for their friends. In the next place, conversion is referred more properly to his glorious life, than to his shameful death; but this reconciliation is attributed to his death, as contradistinguished from his glorious life, as is evident from the antithesis contained in the two verses. Beside, it is from the latter benefit that we learn the nature of the former. The latter, which belongs only to the converted, consists of the peace of God, and salvation from wrath, verse 9, 10. This, the apostle afterward calls, *receiving* the reconciliation, and what is it to receive the reconciliation, but to receive the remission of sins? Acts x, 43. To receive conversion is a mode of speaking entirely unknown. If, then, to receive the reconciliation is to receive the remission of sins and in effect to be delivered from wrath or punishment, to be reconciled must have a corresponding signification." (*Vide Grotius De Satisfactione.*)

2 Cor. v, 19, "God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them." Here, the manner of this reconciliation is expressly said to be not our laying aside our enmity, but the non-imputation of our trespasses to us by God, in other words, the pardoning our offences and restoring us to favour. The promise, on God's part, to do this is expressive of his previous reconciliation to the world by the death of Christ; for our actual reconciliation is distinguished from this by what follows, and hath "committed to us the

"ministry of reconciliation," by virtue of which all men were, by the apostles, entreated and besought to be reconciled to God. The reason, too, of this reconciliation of God to the world, by virtue of which he promises not to impute sin, is grounded by the apostle, in the last verse of the chapter, not upon the laying aside of enmity by men, but upon the sacrifice of Christ:—"For he hath made him to be sin (a sin offering) for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

Ephesians ii, 16, "And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby." Here the act of reconciling is attributed to Christ. Man is not spoken of as reconciling himself to God, but Christ is said to reconcile Jews and Gentiles together, and both to God, "by his cross." Thus, says the apostle, "he is our *peace*;" but in what manner is the peace effected? Not, in the first instance, by subduing the enmity of man's heart, but by removing the enmity of "the law." "Having abolished in, or by his flesh, the enmity, even the *law* of commandments." The ceremonial law only is here, probably, meant; for by its abolition through its fulfilment in Christ the enmity between Jews and Gentiles was taken away; but still it was not only necessary to reconcile Jew and Gentile together, but to "reconcile both unto God." This he did by the same act; abolishing the ceremonial law by becoming the antitype of all its sacrifices; and thus, by the sacrifice of himself, effecting the reconciliation of all to God, "slaying the enmity by his cross," taking away whatever hindered the reconciliation of the guilty to God, which, as we have seen, was not enmity and hatred to God in the human mind only, but that judicial hostility and variance which separated God and man as Judge and criminal. The feeble criticism of Socinus, on this passage, in which he has been followed by his adherents to this day, is thus answered by Grotius. "In this passage, the dative Θεῷ, to God, can only be governed by the verb αποκαταλλαξῃ, that he might reconcile; for the interpretation of Socinus, which makes 'to God' stand by itself, or that to reconcile to God is to reconcile them among themselves, that they might serve God, is distorted and without example. Nor is the argument valid which is drawn from thence, that in this place St. Paul properly treats of the peace made between Jews and Gentiles; for neither does it follow, from this argument, that it was beside his purpose to mention the peace made for each with God. For the two opposites which are joined, are so joined among themselves, that they should be primarily and chiefly joined by that bond; for they are not united among themselves, except by and for that bond. Gentiles and Jews, therefore, are made friends among themselves by friendship with God." (*Vide Grotius De Satisfactione.*)

Here also a critical remark will be appropriate. The above passages

will show how falsely it has been asserted that God is nowhere, in Scripture, said to be reconciled to us, and that they only declare that we are reconciled to GOD; but the fact is, that the very phrase *of our being reconciled to God*, imports the turning away his wrath from us Whitby observes, on the words καταλλαττειν and καταλλαγη, "that they naturally import the reconciliation of one that is angry or displeased with us, both in profane and Jewish writers." (*See also Hammond, Rosenmuller, and Schleusner.*) When the Philistines suspected that David would appease the anger of Saul, by becoming their adversary, they said, "Wherewith should he *reconcile* himself to his master? Should it not be with the heads of these men?"—not, surely, how shall he remove his own anger against his master; but how shall he remove his master's anger against him; how shall he restore himself to his master's favour? "If thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there remembered that thy brother hath aught *against thee*," not that *thou* hast aught against thy *brother*, "first be *reconciled* to thy brother;" that is, appease and conciliate him: so that the words, in fact, import "*see that thy brother be reconciled to thee*," since that which goes before is not that he hath done thee an injury, but thou him. (7)

Thus, then, for us to be reconciled to God is to avail ourselves of the means by which the anger of God toward us is to be appeased, which the New Testament expressly declares to be generally "the sin offering" of him "who knew no sin," and instrumentally, as to each individual personally, "faith in his blood."

A general objection of the Socinians to this doctrine of reconciliation may be easily answered. When we speak of the necessity of Christ's atonement, in order to man's forgiveness, we are told that we represent the Deity as implacable; when we rebut that by showing that it was his very placability, his boundless and ineffable love to men, which sent his Son into the world to die for the sins of mankind, they rejoin with their leaders, Socinus and Crellius, that then "God was reconciled before he sent his Son, and that, therefore, Christ did not die to reconcile GOD to us." The answer plainly is, that in this objection, they either mean that God had, from the placability and compassion of his nature, determined to be reconciled to offenders *upon* the sending his Son, or that he was actually reconciled when our Lord was sent. The first is what we contend for, and is in no wise inconsistent with the submission of our Lord to death, since that was in pursuance of the merciful appointment and decree of the Father; and the necessary medium by which this placability of God could honourably and consistently show

(7) The writers of the New Testament, say some, derive this mode of expression from the force of the Hebrew word רצה transferred to the Greek word; but Palairet, Grotius, and Schleusner, give instances of the use of the term, in the same signification, in writers purely Greek.

itself in actual reconciliation, or the pardon of sin. That God was not actually reconciled to man, that is, that he did not forgive our offences, independent of the death of Christ, is clear, for then sin would have been forgiven before it was committed, and remission of sins could not have been preached in the name of Christ, nor could a ministry of reconciliation have been committed to the apostles. The reconciliation of God to man is, throughout, a conditional one, and, as in all conditional processes of this kind, it has three stages. The first is when the party offended is disposed to admit of terms of agreement, which, in God, is matter of pure grace and favour; the second is when he declares his acceptance of the mediation of a third person, and that he is so satisfied with what he hath done in order to it, that he appoints it to be announced to the offender, that if the breach continues, the fault lies wholly upon himself; the third is when the offender accepts of the terms of agreement which are offered to him, submits, and is received into favour. "Thus," says Bishop Stillingfleet, "upon the death and sufferings of Christ, God declares that he is so satisfied with what Christ hath done and suffered in order to the reconciliation between himself and us, that he now publishes remission of sins to the world, upon those terms which the Mediator hath declared by his own doctrine and the apostles he sent to preach it. But because remission of sins doth not immediately follow upon the death of Christ, without any supposition of any act on our part, therefore the state of favour doth commence from the performance of the conditions which are required of us." (*Discourse on the Sufferings of Christ. See also Grotius De Satisfactione*, cap. vii.) Whoever considers these obvious distinctions will have an ample answer to the Socinian objection.

5. To the texts which speak of reconciliation with God as illustrative of the nature of the death of Christ for us, we add those which speak of "*redemption*;" either by employing that word itself, or others of the same import. Rom. iii, 24, "Being justified freely by his grace, through the *redemption* that is in Christ Jesus." Gal. iii, 13, "Christ hath *redeemed* us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." Ephesians i, 7, "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace." 1 Peter i, 18, 19, "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish, and without spot." 1 Cor. vi, 19, 20, "And ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price."

By redemption, those who deny the atonement made by Christ wish to understand *deliverance* merely, regarding only the effect, and studiously putting out of sight the cause from which it flows. But the very terms used in the above cited passages, "to *redeem*," and "to be *bought*

with a price," will each be found to refute this notion of a gratuitous deliverance, whether from sin or punishment, or both. Our English word to redeem, literally means to buy back; and λυτρυω, to *redeem*, and απολυτρωσις, *redemption*, are, both in Greek writers and in the New Testament, used for the act of setting free a captive, by paying λυτρον, a ransom or redemption price. But, as Grotius (*De Satisfactione*, cap. viii) has fully shown, by reference to the use of the words both in sacred and profane writers, redemption signifies not merely the liberation of captives, but deliverance from exile, death, and every other evil from which we may be freed; and λυτρον signifies every thing which satisfies another, so as to effect this deliverance. The nature of this redemption, or *purchased* deliverance, (for it is not gratuitous liberation, as will presently appear,) is, therefore, to be ascertained by the circumstances of those who are the subjects of it. The subjects in the case before us are sinful men. They are under *guilt*,—under "the curse of the law," the servants of sin, under the power and dominion of the devil, and "taken captive by him at his will"—liable to the death of the body and to eternal punishment. To the whole of this case, the redemption, the *purchased* deliverance of man, as proclaimed in the Gospel, applies itself. Hence, in the above cited and other passages, it is said "we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins," in opposition to guilt; redemption from "the curse of the law;" deliverance from sin, that "we should be set free from sin;" deliverance from the power of Satan; from death, by a resurrection; and from future "wrath," by the gift of eternal life. Throughout the whole of this glorious doctrine of our redemption from these tremendous evils there is, however, in the New Testament, a constant reference to the λυτρον, *the redemption price*, which λυτρον is as constantly declared to be the death of Christ, which he endured in our stead. Matt. xx, 28, "The Son of man came to give his life a *ransom* (λυτρον) for many." 1 Tim. ii, 6, "Who gave himself a *ransom* (αντιλυτρον) for all." Ephesians i, 7, "In whom we have *redemption* (την απολυτρωσιν) through his *blood*." 1 Peter i, 18, 19, "Ye were not redeemed (ελυτρωθητε) with corruptible things, as silver and gold—but with the *precious blood of* Christ." That deliverance of man from sin, misery, and all other penal evils of his transgression which constitutes our redemption by Christ is not, therefore, a gratuitous deliverance, granted without a consideration, as an act of mere prerogative; the ransom, the redemption price, was exacted and paid; one thing was given for another,—the precious blood of Christ for captive and condemned men. Of the same import are those passages which represent us as having been "*bought*," or "*purchased*" by Christ. St. Peter speaks of those "who denied the Lord that *bought* them," (τον αγορασαντα αυτους,) and St. Paul, in the passage cited above, says "ye are bought (ηγορασθητε) with a *price*;" which

price is expressly said by St. John, Rev. v, 9, to be the blood of Christ —"Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God (ηγορασας, hast *purchased* us) by thy blood."

The means by which it has been attempted to evade the force of these most express statements of the inspired writers remain to be pointed out and refuted.

The first is to allege that the term redemption is sometimes used for simple deliverance, where no price or consideration is supposed to be given; as when we read in the Old Testament of God's redeeming his people from trouble, from death, from danger, where no price is mentioned; and when Moses is called, Acts vii, 35, λυτρωτης, a redeemer, because he delivered his people from the bondage of Egypt. But an occasional use of the term in an improper and allusive sense cannot be urged against its strict and proper signification universally; and granting the occasional use of it in an improper sense, it will still remain to be proved that, in the passages just adduced out of the New Testament, it is used in this manner. The propriety of words is not to be receded from, but for weighty reasons. The strict meaning of the verb to redeem, is to deliver from captivity, by paying a ransom; it is extended to signify deliverance from evils of various kinds by the intervention of a valuable consideration; it is, in some cases, used for deliverance by any means; the context of the passage, in which the word occurs, and the circumstances of the case must, therefore, be resorted to in order to determine the sense in which the word is used. Fair criticism requires that we take words in their proper sense, unless a sufficient reason can be shown, from their connection, to the contrary; and not that we are first to take them in their improper sense until the proper sense is forced upon us by argument. This, however, is not a case of argument, but of the obvious sense of the words used; for if deliverances, in some passages of the Old Testament, from trouble and danger are spoken of as a redemption, without reference to a λυτρον, or ransom, our redemption by Christ is not so spoken of; but, on the contrary, the λυτρον, or redemption price, is repeatedly, expressly, and emphatically mentioned, and that price is said to be "the blood of Christ." When Greek writers speak of ακοινα and λυτρα, with reference to the release of a prisoner, nothing could be more absurd, than to attempt to resolve these terms into a figurative meaning; because their mention of the price, and the act of paying it, and the circumstances under which it was paid, all show that they use the terms in the proper and strict sense. For the same reason must they be so understood in the New Testament, since the price itself, which constitutes the λυτρον, and the person who paid it, and the circumstances under which the transaction took place, are all given with as minute an *historical* precision, and a figurative interpretation would involve us in as great an absurdity in the one case as the

other. We apply this to the case of Moses being called a redeemer, with reference to his delivering Israel from Egypt, and remark, that the improper use of that term may be allowed in the case of Moses, because he is nowhere said to have redeemed Israel by his *death*, nor by his *blood*, nor to have purchased the Jews with a *price*, nor to have given himself as a *ransom;* nor to have interposed any other consideration, on account of which he was allowed to lead his people out of captivity. He is said to be a deliverer, a redeemer, and that is all; but the idea of a proper redemption could not, in the nature of things, apply to the case, and, therefore, it is impossible to interpret the term in its proper sense. The Jews were captives, and he delivered them; this was sufficient to warrant the use of the term redemption in its improper sense, a very customary thing in language; but their captivity was not their *fault*, as ours is; it was not *penal*, as ours; they were delivered from unjust oppression; and God required of Moses no redemption price, as a consideration for interposing to free them from bondage. In our case, the captivity was penal; there was a right lodged with the justice of God to detain us, and to inflict punishment upon us; and a consideration was therefore required, in respect of which that right was relaxed. In one instance we are, therefore, compelled to interpret the word in an improper sense; in the other strictly; at least no argument can be drawn from the use of the word with reference to Moses, to turn it out of its proper signification when used of Christ; and especially when all the circumstances, which the word in its proper sense was intended to convey, are found in the case to which the redemption of man by Christ is applied. Above all, the word λυτρον is added by Scripture to the deliverance of men, effected by Christ; but it is nowhere added to the deliverance effected for the Israelites by Moses; and by this it is, in fact, declared, that the *mode* by which the redemption of each was effected, was not the same,—the one was by the destruction of the enemies of the Israelites; the other by the death of the Deliverer himself. (8)

It has been attempted to evade the literal import of the important

(8) "Nam Mosis cum Christo instituta collatio, responsione vix indiget, cum omnis similitudo certos habeat terminos, quos extra protendi nequeat. Comparantur illi, qua liberatores, non ob liberandi modum. Neque magis ex eo sequitur, Christum satisfaciendo nos non liberasse, quia Moses id non fecerit, quàm Christum nos liberasse per hominum mortem, quia id fecerit Moses. Quod si ad modum quoque liberandi comparatio pertineret, ea ut rectius procederet, dicendum esset, Christum nos liberasse miraculis, (ut Moses,) non autem sua morte neque sanguine, quod Mosi nec adscribitur, nec adscribi potest. Sed præcipium est, quod vox λυτρον, de cujus vi hic agimus, liberationi per Mosen partæ nusquam additur. Quid quod ne est Socini quidem sententia modus liberandi idem est? Nam Moses, Josue, et alii liberarunt, non aliquid faciendo circa liberandos, (quod Christo Socinus tribuit) sed amovendo eos qui libertati obstabant, hostes scilicet." (*Grotius, De Satisfactione*, cap. viii.)

terms on which we have dwelt, by urging, that such an interpretation would involve the absurdity of paying a price to Satan, the power said to hold men captive at his will.

But why should the idea of redemption be confined to the purchasing of a captive? The reason appears to be, that the objection may be invested with some plausibility. The fact, however, is, that this is but one species and instance of redemption; for the word, in its proper and general sense, means deliverance from evil of any kind, a λυτρον or valuable consideration intervening; which valuable consideration may not always be literally a price, that is, not money, but something done, or something suffered, by which, in the case of commutation of punishment, the lawgiver is satisfied, though no benefit occurs to him; because in punishment respect is not had to the benefit of the lawgiver, but to the common good and order of things. So when Zaleucus, the Locrian lawgiver, had to pass sentence upon his son, for a crime which, by his own laws, condemned the aggressor to the loss of both his eyes, rather than relax his laws by sparing his son, he ordered him to be deprived of one of his eyes, and submitted to be deprived of one himself. Thus the eye of Zaleucus was the λυτρον of that of his son; and, in a decimation of mutinous soldiers, those who are punished are the λυτρον of the whole body.

But even if the redemption, in Scripture, related wholly to captivity, it does not follow that the price must be paid to him who detains the captive. Our captivity to Satan is not parallel to the case of a captive taken in war, and in whom, by the laws of war, the captor has obtained a right, and demands an equivalent for liberation and the renunciation of that right. Our captivity to Satan is judicial. Man listens to temptation, violates the laws of God, joins in a rebellion against his authority, and his being left under the power of Satan is a part of his punishment. The satisfaction is, therefore, to be made to the law under which this captivity is made a part of the penalty; not to him who detains the captive, and who is but a permitted instrument in the execution of the law, but to him whose law has been violated. He who pays the price of redemption has to do with the judicial authority only, and, his λυτρον being accepted, he proceeds to rescue the object of his compassion, and becomes the actual redeemer.

The λυτρον, in the case of man, is the blood of Christ; and our redemption is not a commutation of a pecuniary price for a person, but a commutation of the sufferings of one person in the stead of another, which sufferings being a punishment, in order to satisfaction, is a valuable consideration, and, therefore, a price for the redemption of man out of the hands of Satan, and from all the consequences of that captivity. (*Vide Stillingfleet's Discourses on the Sufferings, &c.*)

Under this head, now that we are showing that the death of Christ is

exhibited in Scripture as the price of our redemption, it may also be necessary to meet another objection, that this doctrine of purchase and commutation is inconsistent with that freeness of the grace of God in the forgiveness of sins, on which so great a stress is laid in the Scriptures. This objection has been urged from Socinus to Dr. Priestley, and is thus stated by the latter: (*History of the Corruptions:*) "The Scriptures uniformly represent God as our universal parent, pardoning sinners *freely*, that is, from his natural goodness and mercy, whenever they repent and reform their lives. All the declarations of Divine mercy are made, without reserve and limitation, to the truly penitent, through all the books of Scripture, without the most distant hint of any regard being had to the sufferings or merit of any being whatever." The proofs which he gives for this bold, and, indeed, impudent position, are chiefly the declaration of the apostle, that we are justified *freely* by the grace of God, and he contends that the word *freely* "implies that forgiveness is the *free gift* of God, and proceeds from his essential goodness and mercy, *without regard to any foreign consideration whatever.*" It is singular, however, that the position, as Dr. Priestley has put it in the above quotations, refutes itself; for even he restricts the exercise of this mercy of God, "to the truly penitent," "to them who repent and reform their lives." Forgiveness, therefore, is not, even according to him and his followers, *free* in the sense of unconditional; and at the very time he denies that pardon is bestowed by God, "without regard to any consideration whatever, foreign to his essential goodness and mercy," he acknowledges that it is regulated, in its exercise, by the consideration of the penitence or non-penitence of the guilty, who are the subjects of it, from which the contradictory conclusion follows, that, in bestowing mercy, God has respect to a consideration *foreign to his goodness and mercy*, even the penitence of man, so that there is, in the mode of dispensing mercy, a reserve and limitation on the part of God.

Thus, then, unless they would let in all kinds of license, by preaching an unconditional pardon, the Socinians are obliged to acknowledge, that a thing may be done *freely*, which is, nevertheless, not done unconditionally. For, as it was replied, of old, to Socinus, whom Dr. Priestley follows in this objection, if this be not acknowledged, then the grossest Antinomianism is the true doctrine. For, if forgiveness of sin can only be accounted a *free gift* by being dependent upon no condition, and subject to no restrictions, it follows, that the repentance and amendment of the offender himself are no more to be regarded than the sufferings and merit of any other being; and, consequently, that all sinners, without reserve or limitation, have an equal claim of pardon, whether they repent or not. If, to avoid this consequence, it be said that God is free to choose the objects to whom he will show mercy, and to impose upon them such restrictions, and to require of them such

qualifications as he thinks fit; it may then, with equal reason, be asserted, that he is also free to dispense his mercy for such reasons and by such methods as he, in his wisdom, shall determine to be most conducive to his own glory and the good of his creatures, and there is no reason whatever to be given why a regard to the sufferings or merit of another person should more destroy the *freeness* of the gift, than the requisition of certain qualifications in the object himself. (*Vide Veysie' Bampton Lectures.*) Thus the argument urged in the objection proves as much against the objectors as it does against us, or rather it proves nothing against either: for the showing mercy to the guilty, by any method, was a matter in which almighty God was perfectly free. He might have exacted the penalty of his violated law upon the sinning individual; and to forgive sin, in any manner, was, in him, therefore, an act of unspeakable grace and favour. Again, from the mode and limitation of dispensing this grace and favour, he derives no advantage (for the gratification of his own benevolence is not a question of *interest*) in the whole transaction; both in the mercy dispensed and in the mode the benefit of the creature is kept in view; nor could the persons pardoned themselves furnish any part of the consideration on which they are pardoned, or, of themselves, perform the conditions required of them; so that, for all these reasons, the pardon of man is a free gift, and its mode of being dispensed is the proof that it is so, and not a proof to the contrary.

But the very passage of St. Paul, to which Dr. Priestley refers, when he contends that the doctrine of the New Testament is, "that forgiveness is the *free* gift of God, and proceeds from his essential goodness and mercy, without regard to any foreign consideration whatever," refutes his inference. The passage is, "being justified *freely* by his grace, through the *redemption which is in Christ Jesus.*" The same doctrine is taught in other passages; and so far is it from being true, that no reference is made to any consideration beyond the mere goodness and mercy of God, that consideration is stated in so many express words, "through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus;" of which redemption the blood of Christ is the price, as taught in the text above commented on. But though it was convenient, in order to render a bold assertion more plausible, to keep this out of sight, a little reflection might have shown, that the argument built upon the word *freely*, the term used by the apostle, proceeds upon an entire mistake. The expression has reference to ourselves and to our own exertions in the work of justification, not to any thing which has been done by another in our behalf; and it is here used to denote the manner in which the blessing is *bestowed*, not the means by which it was *procured*. "Being justified *freely* by his grace"—*freely*, in the original δωρεαν, in the way of a gift unmerited by us, and not in the way of a reward for our worthiness or

desert, agreeably to the assertion of the apostle in another place, "not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us." To be justified, is to be pardoned, and treated as righteous in the sight of God, and to be admitted thus into his favour and acceptance. But man, in his fallen state, had nothing in himself, and could do nothing of himself, by which he might merit, or claim as his due so great a benefit. Having, therefore, no pretensions to real righteousness, our absolution from the guilt of sin, and our admission to the character and privileges of righteous persons, must be imputed not to our merit, but to the grace of God; it is an act of mercy which we must acknowledge and receive as a free gift, and not demand as a just reward. Nor do the means by which our justification was affected in any respect alter its nature as a gift, or in the least diminish its freedom. "We are justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ;" but this redemption was not procured by us, nor provided at our expense. It was the result of the pure love of God, who, compassionating our misery, himself provided the means of our deliverance, by sending his only-begotten Son into the world, who voluntarily submitted to die upon the cross, that he might become the propitiation for our sins, and reconcile us to God. Thus is the whole an entire act of mercy on the part of God and Christ; begun and completed for our benefit, but without our intervention; and, therefore, with *respect to us*, the pardon of sin must still be accounted a gift, though it comes to us through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ.

Equally unfounded is the argument built upon the passages in which the forgiveness of sins is represented under the notion of the free remission of a debt; in which act, it is said, there is no consideration of atonement and satisfaction. When sin is spoken of as a debt, a metaphor is plainly employed, and it would be a novel rule to interpret what is plainly literal by what is metaphorical. There is, undoubtedly, something in the act of forgiving sin which is common with the act of remitting a debt by a creditor, or there would be no foundation for the metaphor; but it can by no means legitimately follow, that the remission of sins is, in all its circumstances, to be interpreted by all the circumstances which accompany the free remission of a debt. We know on the contrary, that remission of sins is not unconditional; repentance and faith are required in order to it, which is acknowledged by the Socinians themselves. But this acknowledgment is fatal to the argument they would draw from the instances in the New Testament, in which almighty God is represented as a merciful creditor, freely forgiving his insolvent debtors; for if the act of remitting sins be in all respects like the act of forgiving debts, then indeed can neither repentance, nor faith, nor condition of any kind, be insisted upon in order to forgiveness; since, in the instances referred to, the debtors were discharged without any express-

ed condition at all. But something, also, previous to our repentance and faith, is constantly connected in the Holy Scriptures of the New Testament with the very offer of forgiveness. "It *behooved* Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead on the third day," that "repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations." It was necessary, as we have already seen, that the one should take place before the other could be announced; and some degree of necessity is allowed in the case, even on the Socinian hypothesis, although a very subordinate one. But if by an act of prerogative alone, unfettered by any considerations of justice and right, as is a creditor when he freely forgives a debt, God forgives sins, then there could be no necessity of any conceivable kind for "Christ to suffer;" and the offer of remission of sins would, in that case, have been wholly independent of his sufferings, which is contrary to the text. In perfect accordance with the above passage, is that in Acts xiii, 38, where it is said, "Be it known unto you, therefore, men and brethren, that through this man, (δια τουτου *through the means of this man*,) is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins." Here the same means as those before mentioned by St. Luke, are obviously referred to, "the death and resurrection of Christ." Still more expressly, Matt. xxvi, 28, our Lord declares that his blood is "the blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins;" where he plainly makes his blood the procuring cause of that remission, and a necessary libation in order to its being attainable. Our redemption is said by St. Paul, Ephes. i, 7, to be, "through his blood," and this redemption he explains to be "the remission of our sins;" and in writing to the Hebrews he lays it down, as that very principle of the Old Testament dispensation which made it typical of the New, that "without shedding of blood there was no remission." This remission, is, nevertheless, for the reasons given above, always represented as a free act of the Divine mercy; for the apostles saw no inconsistency in giving to it this free and gracious character on the one hand, and on the other proclaiming, that that free and adorable mercy was called into exercise by the "chastisement of our sins being laid upon Christ;" and thus by uniting both, they broadly and infallibly distinguish "the act of a lawgiver, who in forgiving sins has respect to the authority of the law, and the act of a creditor, who in remitting a debt disposes of his property at his pleasure."

But although no criticism can be more fallacious than to interpret the forgiveness of sins, which is a plain and literal transaction, by a metaphor, or a parable, which may have either too few or too many circumstances interwoven with it for just illustration, when applied beyond, or contrary to, its intention, the reason of the metaphor is at once obvious and beautiful. The verb αφιημι, is the word commonly used for the remission of sins and the remission of debts. It signifies to send away,

dismiss; and is accommodated to both these acts. The ideas of absolute right in one party, and of binding obligation on the other, hold good equally as to the lawgiver and the transgressor, the creditor and the debtor. The lawgiver has a right to demand obedience, the creditor to demand his property; the transgressor of law is under the bond of its penalty, the debtor is under the obligation of repayment or imprisonment. This is the basis of the comparison between debts of money, and obligations of obedience to a lawgiver; and the same word is equally well applied to express the cancelling of each, though, except in the respects just stated, they are transactions and relations very different to each other. Every sin involves an obligation to punishment; and when sin is *dismissed*, *sent away*, or in other words forgiven, the liability to punishment is removed, just as when a debt is *dismissed*, *sent away*, or in other words remitted, the obligation of repayment, and, in default of that, the obligation of imprisonment, or, according to the ancient law, of being sold as a slave, is removed with it. So far the resemblance goes; but the Scriptures themselves, by connecting pardon of sin with a previous atonement, prevent it from being carried farther. And, indeed, the reason of the case sufficiently shows the difference between the remitting of a debt, which is the act of a private man, and the pardon of transgressions against a public law, which is the act of a magistrate; between an act which affects the private interests of one, and an act, which, in its bearing upon the authority of the public law and the protection and welfare of society, affects the interests of many; in a word, between an act which is a matter of mere feeling, and in which rectoral justice can have no place, and one which must be harmonized with rectoral justice; for compassion to the guilty can never be the leading rule of government.

6. The nature of the death of Christ is still farther explained in the New Testament, by the manner in which it connects our justification with "faith in the blood," the sufferings which Christ endured in our stead; and both our justification, and the death of Christ as its meritorious cause, with "THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD." According to the testimony of the whole of the evangelic writers, the justification of man is an act of the highest grace, a manifestation of the superlative and ineffable love of GOD, and is, at the same time a strictly RIGHTEOUS proceeding.

These views, scattered throughout the books of the New Testament, are summed up in the following explicit language of St. Paul, Rom. iii, 24–26: "Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Whom God hath set forth as a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time his righteousness, that he might be *just*, and the justifier of

man which believeth in Jesus." The argument of the apostle is exceedingly [illegible]. He treats of man's justification before God, of which he mentions two methods. The first is by our own obedience to the law of God, on the principle of all righteous law, that obedience secures exemption from punishment; or, as he expresses it, chap. x, 5, "For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, *that the man which doeth these things shall live by them.*" This method of justification he proves to be impossible to man in his present state of degeneracy, and from the actual transgressions of Jews and Gentiles, on account of which "the whole world" is guilty before God; and he therefore lays it down as an incontrovertible maxim, that "by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified," since "by the law is the knowledge of sin;" for which it provides no remedy. The other method is justification by the grace of God, as a "free gift;" but coming to us through the intervention of the death of Christ, as our redemption price; and received instrumentally by our faith in him. "Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ." He then immediately adds, "whom God hath set forth," openly exhibited and publicly announced, "to be a propitiation;" to be the person through whose voluntary and vicarious sufferings he is reconciled to sinful man, and by whom he will justify all who "through faith" confide "in" the virtue of "his blood," shed for the remission of sins. But this public announcement and setting forth of Christ as a propitiation was not only for a declaration of the Divine *mercy;* but pardon was offered to men in this method, to declare the "*righteousness*" of God, (εις ενδειξιν δικαιοσυνης αυτου,) *for a demonstration of his righteousness or justice,* in the remission of past sins, "that he might be *just* and yet the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus" that he might show himself to be strictly and inviolably righteous in the administration of his government, even while he justifies the offender that believes in Jesus. The Socinian version renders the passage, "to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins," to show his method of justification concerning the remission of past sins. Even when the strict rectoral justice of the act of justifying sinners, through faith in the blood of Christ, is expressed by the following clause, "that he might be just;" but the sense of the whole passage requires the literal rendering, "to declare his *justice,* that he might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus." Some have indeed taken the word "just" (δικαιος) in the sense of merciful; but this is wholly arbitrary. It occurs, says Whitby, above eighty times in the New Testament, and not once in that sense. (9) The sense just given is confirmed

[illegible] Newton's Remarks on the New Version, Magee on the Atonement, Whitby [illegible] in loc. Righteousness is indeed sometimes used for *veracity;* [illegible] some principle of equity, or some obligation arising from engagement [illegible] or threat, is implied.

by all the ancient versions, and it is indeed put beyond the reach of verbal criticism by the clause, "for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God." For, whatever view we take of this clause, whether we refer it to the sins of men before the coming of Christ, or to the past sins of one who is at any time justified, the παρεσις, or "passing over" of sins, or, if the common rendering please better, "the remission of sins," and the "forbearance of God," are acts of obvious mercy; and to say that thus the mercy of God is manifested, is tautological and identical; whereas past sins not punished through the forbearance of God, without a public atonement, might have brought the *justice* of God into question, but certainly not his mercy. It was the justice of the proceeding, therefore, that needed a demonstration, and not the mercy of it. This, too, is the obvious reason for the repetition so emphatically used by the apostle, and which is no otherwise to be accounted for; "to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God, *to delare, I say, at this time*, his righteousness;" "at this time," now that Christ has actually appeared to pay the ransom, and to become the publicly announced propitiation for sin; God cannot now appear otherwise than just, although he justifies him that believeth in Jesus. Similar language is also used by St. John 1st Epistle, i, 9, "He is faithful and *just* to forgive us our sins."—So that the grand doctrine of Christianity is unequivocally stated by both apostles to be, that, according to its constitution, the forgiveness of sin is at once an *act of mercy* and an *act of justice*, or of strictly righteous government. Neither the Socinian nor the Arian hypothesis, at all harmonizes with this principle; on the contrary, they both directly contradict it, and cannot, therefore, be true. They make the forgiveness of sin, indeed, an act of mercy: but with them it is impossible that it should be an act of justice, because sin receives not its threatened punishment; the penalty of the law is not exacted; the offender meets with entire impunity; and the Divine administration, so far from being a righteous one, has, according to their system, no respect to either truth or righteousness; and, so far as offences against the Divine law are concerned, that law is reduced to a dead letter.

But in Scripture the doctrine of forgiveness of sins, through the propitiatory sacrifice of Christ, is not only asserted to be a demonstration of the righteousness of God in a case which might seem to bring it into question, but the particular steps and parts of this "demonstration" are, by its light, easy to be traced. For,

1. The law, the rule of the Divine government, is by this means established in its *authority* and *perpetuity*. The hypothesis which rejects the doctrine of the atonement, repeals the law by giving impunity to transgression; for, if punishment does not follow offence, or no other term of pardon be required than one which the culprit has it always in his

own power, at once, to offer, (which we have seen is the case with the repentance stated by Socinians as the only condition of forgiveness,) then is the law, as to its authority, virtually repealed, and the Divine government, over rebellious creatures, annihilated. The Christian doctrine of atonement, on the contrary, is, that sin cannot go unpunished in the Divine administration, and, therefore, the authority of the law is established by this absolute and everlasting exclusion of impunity from transgression.

2. Whether we take the righteousness or justice of God, for that holiness and rectitude of his nature from which his punitive justice flows; or for the latter, which consists in exacting the penalty righteously and wisely attached to offences against the Divine law, or for both united as the stream and the fountain; it is demonstrated, by the refusal of impunity to sin, that God is this holy and righteous Being, this strict and exact Governor. On any other theory, there is no manifestation of God's hatred of sin, answering at all to that intense holiness of his nature, which must lead him to abhor it; and no proof of his rectoral justice as Governor of the world. Mercy is, according to them all, administered on a mere principle of feeling, without any regard to holiness or justice whatever.

3. The doctrine which connects the pardon of the guilty with the meritorious death of Christ, illustrates the attribute of Divine justice, by the very act of connecting and blending it with the attribute of love, and the exercise of an effectual compassion. At the time that it guards with so much care, the doctrine of non-impunity to sin, it offers impunity to the sinner; but then the medium through which this offer is made serves to heighten the impression of God's hatred to sin, and the inflexible character of his justice. The person appointed to suffer the punishment of sin and the penalty of the law for us, was not a mere human being, not a creature of any kind, however exalted, but the Son of God; and in him Divinity and humanity were united in one person, so that he was "God manifested in the flesh," assuming our nature in order that he might offer it in death a sacrifice to God. If this was *necessary*, and we have already proved it to have been so in the strictest sense, then is sin declared, by the strongest demonstration we can conceive, to be an evil of immeasurable extent; and the justice of God is, by a demonstration of equal force, declared to be inflexible and inviolable. God "*spared* not his own Son."

Here, indeed, it has been objected by Socinus and his followers, that the dignity of a person adds nothing to the estimation of his sufferings. The common opinion of mankind, in all ages, is, however, a sufficient refutation of this objection, for in proportion to the excellence of the creatures immolated in sacrifice have the value and efficacy of oblations been estimated by all people; which notion, when perverted, made them

resort, in some instances, to human sacrifices, in cases of great extremity; and surely, if the principle of substitution existed in the penal law of any human government, it would be universally felt to make a great difference in the character of the law, whether an honourable or a mean substitute were exacted in place of the guilty; and that it would have greatly changed the character of the act of Zaleucus, the Locrian lawgiver, before mentioned, and placed the estimation in which he held his own laws, and the degree of strictness with which he was determined to uphold them, in a very different light, if, instead of parting with one of his own eyes, in place of the remaining eye of his son, he had ordered the eye of some base slave or of a malefactor to be plucked out. But without entering into this, the notion will be explicitly refuted, if we turn to the testimony of Holy Writ itself, in which the dignity and Divinity of our Lord are so often emphatically referred to as stamping that *value* upon his sacrifice, as giving that *consideration* to his voluntary sufferings on our account, which we usually express by the term of "*his merits*," Acts xx, 28, as GOD, he is said to have "purchased the Church with HIS OWN BLOOD." In Colos. i, 14, 15, we are said to have "redemption through HIS BLOOD, who is THE IMAGE OF THE INVISIBLE GOD." In 1 Cor. ii, 8, "the LORD OF GLORY is said to have been CRUCIFIED." St. Peter emphatically calls the blood of Christ "PRECIOUS BLOOD;" and St. Paul dwells particularly upon this peculiarity, when he contrasts the sacrifice of Christ with those of the law, and when he ascribes that purifying efficacy, which he denies to the blood of bulls and of goats, to the blood of Christ. "HOW MUCH MORE shall the BLOOD OF CHRIST, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God." By the argument of Socinus there could be no difference between the blood of animals, shed under the law, as to value and efficacy, and the blood of Christ, which is directly in the teeth of the declaration and argument of the apostle, who also asserts, that the *patterns* of things in the heavens were purified by animal sacrifices; "but the heavenly things themselves with BETTER SACRIFICES than these," namely, the oblation of Christ.

To another objection of Socinus, that because the Divinity itself suffers not, therefore it does not enter into this consideration of punishment, Grotius well replies, This is as much as to say that it is an offence of the same kind whether you strike a private person or a king, a stranger or a father, because blows are directed against the body, not against dignity or relationship. (1)

(1) "Quod autem Socinus argumentatur, quia divinitas ipsa non patiatur, ideo hanc in pœnæ considerationem non venire; perinde est ac si dicas, nihil referre privatum an Regem, item ignotum, an patrem verbores, quia verbera in corpus dirigantur, non in dignitatum, aut cognationem." (*De Satisfactione.*)

4. In farther considering this subject, as illustrating the inherent and the rectoral righteousness of God, we are to recollect that, although by the atonement made for the sins of mankind by the death of Christ, all men, antecedently to their repentance and faith, are, to use the language of divines, put into "a salvable state," yet none of them are by this act of Christ, brought from under the authority of the moral law. This remains in its full and original force, and as they all continue under the original obligation of obedience, so in case of those conditions not being complied with, on which the actual communication of the benefit of redemption has been made to depend, those who neglect the great salvation offered to them by Christ, fall under the full original penalty of the law, and are left to its malediction, without obstruction to the exercise and infliction of Divine justice. Nor, with respect to those who perform the conditions required of them, and who, by faith in Christ, are justified, and thus escape punishment, is there any repeal, or even relaxation, of the authority of the law of God. The end of justification is not to set men free from law, but from punishment; for, concomitant with justification, though distinct from it, is the communication of the regenerating grace of the Holy Spirit, by which the corrupt and invalid nature of man is restored to the love of holiness and the power to practise it, and thus the law of God becomes his constant rule, and the measure of that holiness to which, when this new creation has taken place, he vigorously aspires: "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son, in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Not, indeed, that this obedience, which, in the present life, is, in some respects, imperfect, and in every degree the result of the operation of God within us, can, after this change, be the rule of our continued justification and acceptance; that will rest, from first to last, upon the atonement of Christ, pleaded in our behalf; so that, if any man again sin, "he has an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous;" but true faith leads, by an inseparable connection, both to justification and to regeneration; and they who, as the apostle argues, Romans vi, 2, are thus "dead to sin, cannot continue any longer therein," but yield willing obedience to the law of God. The rule of God, the authority of his law is thus re-established over his creatures, and the strictness of a righteous government is united with the exercise of a tender mercy.

Thus, then, in the doctrine of the atonement of Christ, we see how the righteousness, the essential and the rectoral justice, of God is manifested. There is no impunity to sin; and yet the impunity to the sinner, through faith in the blood of Christ, does not repeal, does not lower, but establish the law of God. These views will also enable us to attach an

explicit meaning to the theological phrase, "the satisfaction made to Divine justice," by which the nature of Christ's atonement is often expressed. This is not a phrase of Holy Writ; but it is not, on that account, to be disregarded, since, like many others, it has been found useful as a guard against subtle evasions of the doctrine of Scripture, and in giving explicitness, not, indeed, to the language of inspiration, but to the *sense* in which that language is interpreted.

The two following views of satisfaction may be given as those which are most prevalent among those divines who hold the doctrine of the atonement of Christ.

The first may be thus epitomised:—

The justice of God being concerned to vindicate his laws, and to inflict upon offenders the due reward of their evil deeds, it is agreed that, without proper satisfaction, sin could not be forgiven. For, as sin is opposite to the purity and holiness of God, and, consequently, cannot but provoke his displeasure; and, as justice is essential to the Divine nature, and exists there in a supreme degree, it must, inflexibly, require the punishment of those who are thus objects of his wrath. The satisfaction, therefore, made by the death of Christ consisted in his taking the place of the guilty; and in his sufferings and death being, from the dignity of his nature, regarded by the offended Lawgiver, as a full equivalent and adequate compensation for the punishment by death, of the personally guilty.

The second opinion does not assume the absolute necessity of a satisfaction to Divine justice, but chiefly insists upon the *wisdom* and *fitness* of the measure, arguing, that it became the almighty Governor of the universe to consult the *honour* of his law, and not to suffer it to be violated with impunity, lest his subjects should call in question his justice. Accordingly, he sent his own Son into the world, who, by dying for our sins, obtained our release from punishment; and, at the same time, made an honourable display of the righteousness of God. In a word, Christ is supposed, in this opinion, to have made satisfaction for our sins, not because his death is to be accounted an adequate compensation, or a full equivalent for the remission of punishment; but because his suffering in our stead maintained the honour of the Divine law, and yet gave free scope to the mercy of the Lawgiver.

Both these opinions have great names for their advocates; but the reader will feel, that there is too much indistinctness in the terms and phrases in which they are expressed for either of them to be received as a satisfactory enunciation of this important doctrine. The first opinion, though greatly to be preferred, and with proper explanations, just, is defective in not explaining what is meant by the terms "a full equivalent" and "an adequate compensation." The second is objectionable, as appearing to refer the atonement more to wisdom and fitness

as an *expedient*, than to wisdom and fitness in close and inseparable connection with justice; and is defective in not pointing out what that connection between the death of Christ and that honouring of the law of God is, which allows of the remission of punishment to offenders, of which they speak. Each embodies much truth, and yet both are capable of originating great and fatal errors, unless their terms be definitely and Scripturally understood.

To clear this subject some farther observations will, then, be necessary.

The term *satisfaction* is taken from the Roman law, and signifies to *content a person aggrieved*, by doing or by offering something which procures liberation from the obligation of debts or the penalties of offences; not *ipso facto*, but by the will of the aggrieved party admitting this substitution. "Ea dictio (*satisfaciendi* vocabulum) in *jure* et usu communi significat facti alicujus aut rei exhibitionem, ex quâ non quidem *ipso facto*, sed accedente *voluntatis* actu liberatio sequatur; soletque non tantum in pecuniaris *debitis*, sed et in *delictis* hoc sensu usurpari, quod linquæ ex Romanâ depravatæ appellant, aliquem *contentare*." (*Grotius De Satisfactione.*) So the Roman lawyer Caius, "satisfacere dicimur ei cujus desiderium implemus," we are said to satisfy him whose desires we fulfil. Ulpian opposes satisfaction to payment, "satisfactio pro solutione;" and, in criminal cases, Asconius lays it down as a rule, "satisfacere, est tantum facere, quantum satis sit irato ad vindictam," to satisfy is to do as much as, to the party offended, may be enough in the way of vengeance. (*Vide Chapman's Eusebius.*) It is from this use of the term that it has been adopted into theology, and however its meaning may have been heightened or lowered by the advocates of different systems, it is plain that, by the term itself, nothing is indicated, but the contentment of the injured party by any thing which he may choose to accept in the place of the enforcement of his obligation upon the party indebted or offending. The sense in which it must be applied to designate the nature and effect of the death of Christ, in consistency with the views we have already taken, is obvious. We call the death of Christ a satisfaction offered to Divine justice for the transgressions of men, with reference to its *effect* upon the mind of the supreme Lawgiver. As a *just* Governor, he is *satisfied*, *contented* with the atonement offered by the vicarious death of his Son, and the conditions on which it is to become available to the offenders; and their punishment, those conditions being accomplished, is no longer exacted.

This effect upon the mind of the Lawgiver is not, as the Socinians would pervert the doctrine, the satisfaction of an angry, vengeful affection, as we have before shown; but, according to the very phrase employed in all cases, and which is sufficient to show that their perversion of our meaning is *wilful*, "a satisfaction," or "contentment" of his *justice*,

which means, and can only rationally mean, the satisfaction of the mind of a just or righteous governor, disposed from the goodness of his nature, to show mercy to the guilty, and who can now do it consistently with the rectitude of his character, and the authority of his laws, which it is the office of punitive justice to proclaim, and to uphold. The satisfaction of Divine justice by the death of Christ, consists, therefore, in this, that this wise and gracious provision on the part of the Father having been voluntarily carried into effect by the Son, the just God has determined it to be as consistent with his own holy and righteous character, and the ends of law and government, to forgive all who have true "faith in the blood of Christ," the appointed propitiation for sin, as though they had all been personally punished for their transgressions.

The death of Christ, then, is the satisfaction accepted; and this being a satisfaction to *justice*, that is, a consideration which satisfied God, as being essentially righteous, and as having strict and inflexible respect to the justice of his government; pardon through, or for the sake of that death, became, in consequence, "a declaration of the righteousness of God," as the only appointed method of remitting the punishment of the guilty; and if so, satisfaction respects not, in the first instance, according to the second opinion we have stated above, the *honour* of the law of God, but its *authority*, and the upholding of that righteous and holy character of the Lawgiver, and of his administration, of which that law is the visible and public expression. Nor is this to be regarded as merely *wise* and *fit expedient* of government, a point to which even Grotius leans too much, as well as many other divines who have adopted the second opinion; for this may imply that it was one of many other possible expedients, though the best; whereas we have seen, that it is every where in Scripture represented as necessary to human salvation; and that it is to be concluded, that no alternative existed but that of exchanging a righteous government for one careless and relaxed, to the dishonour of the Divine attributes, and the sanctioning of moral disorder; or the upholding of such a government by the personal and extreme punishment of every offender; or else the acceptance of the vicarious death of an infinitely dignified and glorious being, through whom pardon should be offered, and in whose hands a process for the moral restoration of the lapsed should be placed. The humiliation, sufferings, and death of such a being, did most obviously demonstrate the righteous character and administration of God; and if the greatest means we can conceive was employed for this end, then we may safely conclude, that the righteousness of God, in the forgiveness of sin, could not have been demonstrated by inferior means; and as God cannot cease to be a righteous Governor, man, in that case, could have had no hope.

The advocates of the second opinion not only speak of the honour of the Divine law being concerned in this transaction; but of the maintenance of the justice of God, in which they come substantially to an agreement with those who hold the first opinion; and if so, there appears no reason to except to such phrases as a "full equivalent" and "an adequate compensation," when soberly interpreted. An equivalent is something of equal value, or of equal force and power, to something else; but here the value spoken of is *judicial value*, that which is to *weigh* equally in the mind of a wise, benevolent, and yet strictly righteous Governor; and if the death of Christ for sinners was determined, in his infallible judgment, to be as equal a "demonstration" of his justice, as the personal and extreme punishment of offenders themselves, it was, in this judicial consideration of the matter, of equal weight, and therefore of equal value, as a means of righteous government; for which reason, also, it was of equal force, or power, or cogency, another leading sense of the term equivalent. So also, as to the term "compensation," which signifies the weighing of one thing against another, the making amends. If this be interpreted as the former, *judicially*, the death of Christ for sinners is an adequate compensation for their personal punishment, in the estimation of Divine justice; because it is, at least, an equally powerful demonstration of the righteousness of God, who only in consideration of that atonement forgives the sins of offending men.

Just, however, and significant as these phrases are when thus interpreted, one reason why they have been objected to by some orthodox divines is, that they have been used in support of the Antinomian doctrine. On this account they have been by some wholly rejected, and a loose and dangerous phraseology introduced, when the reason of the case only required that they should be explained. The Antinomian perversion of them may here be briefly refuted, though that doctrine will afterward come under our more direct consideration.

In the first place the Antinomians connect the satisfaction of Christ, with the doctrine of the imputation of his *active* righteousness to believers. With them, therefore, the satisfaction of Christ means his performing for us that obedience which we were bound to perform. They consider our Lord as a proxy for men; so that his perfect obedience to the law should be esteemed by God, as done by them; as theirs in legal construction, and that his perfect righteousness being imputed to them, renders them legally righteous and sinless. The plain answer to this is, 1. That we have no such office ascribed in Scripture to the active righteousness of Christ, which is only spoken of there in connection with his atonement, as rendering him a fit victim or sacrifice for sin—"he *died*, the *just* for the unjust." 2. That this doctrine of the imputation of Christ's obedience makes his sufferings superfluous. For if he has done all that the law required of us, and if this is legally accounted our doing, then are

we under no penalty of suffering, and his suffering in our stead was more than the law and the case required. 3. That this involves a *fiction* opposed to the ends of moral government, and shuts out the obligation of personal obedience to the law of God; so far, therefore, is it from being a demonstration of God's righteousness, his rectoral justice, that it transfers the obligation of obedience from the subjects of the Divine government to Christ, and leaves man without law, and God without dominion, which is obviously contrary to the Scriptures, and favourable to license of every kind. 4. This is not *satisfaction* in any good sense; it is merely the performance of all that the law requires by one person substituted for another.

Again, the terms *full satisfaction* and *full equivalent*, are taken by the Antinomians in the sense of the payment of debts by a surety for him who has not the means of payment; as though sins were analogous to civil debts. This proceeds upon the mistake of confounding the cancelling of a debt of judicial obligation, with the payment of a debt of money. We have already seen the difference between the relation of a sinner to his offended Judge and Sovereign, and that of a pecuniary debtor to a creditor, and have pointed out the basis of the metaphor, when it occurs as a figurative representation in Scripture. Such payment would not be satisfaction in the proper sense, which stands opposed to payment, and means the acceptance of something in the place of what is due, with which the Lawgiver is content. Nor can any such sense be forced upon the term satisfaction, for we have no such representation in Scripture of the death of Christ, as that it is, in principle, like the payment of so many talents or pounds by one person, for so many talents or pounds owing by another, and which thereby cancels all future obligation. His atoning act consisted in suffering, "the just for the unjust;" neither in doing just so many holy acts as we were bound to do, nor in suffering the precise quantum of pain which we deserved to suffer, neither of which appears in the nature of things to be even possible; but doing and suffering that which by reason of the peculiar glory and dignity of the person thus coming under the bond of the law, both as to obedience and suffering, was accounted by God to be a sufficient "demonstration of his righteousness," in showing mercy to all who truly believe in him. And as this notion of payment in full and kind by a surety is contrary to the import of satisfaction, so also is it inconsistent with the import of the phrase, a full equivalent. He who pays a civil debt in full for another, does not render an equivalent; but gives precisely what the original obligation required. So, if the obedience of Christ were equal in quantity and degree to all the acts of obedience due by men, and is to be accounted theirs, there is no equivalent offered; but the same thing is done, only it is done by another; and if the penal sufferings of Christ were in nature, quantity, and intenseness, equal to

the punishment of all sinners, in time and eternity taken together, and are to be accounted their sufferings, no proper equivalent is offered in the case. The only true sense of the sufferings of Christ being a full equivalent for the remission of the punishment due to the guilty, is, that they equally availed to the satisfying of Divine justice, and vindicating the authority of his laws; that they were equivalent, in the estimation of a just Governor, in the administration of his laws, to the punishment of the guilty; equivalent in effect to a *legal satisfaction*, which would consist in the enforcement upon the persons of the offenders of the penalty of the violated commandment.

Another consequence to which the Antinomian view leads, is, that it makes the justification of men a matter of *right*, not of *grace*.

We can easily, when the doctrine of satisfaction is properly stated, answer the infidel and Socinian objection, that it destroys the free and gracious nature of an act of forgiveness. For, not to urge again what has before been advanced, that the Father was the fountain of this mercy, and "*gave*" the Son; the satisfaction was *quid recusabile*, or such as God might have refused. For if the laws, under which God had placed us, were "holy, just, and good," which is their real character, and if the penalties attached to their violation were righteous, which must also be conceded, then it would have been righteous, every way consistent with the glory of God, and with every perfection of his nature, to have enforced the penalty. The satisfaction offered might not be unjust in him to accept, and yet he was clearly under no obligation to accept it could it have been offered independent of himself, much less could he be under any obligation to *provide* it, which he did. The offender could have no right to claim such a provision, and it depended, therefore, solely on the will of God, and as such was an act of the highest grace.

Again, the forgiveness of sinners, through an atonement, is not *de jure*, that which can be claimed as a matter of *right*. It is made to consist with law, but is not in any sense by the law. However valuable the atonement, yet, independent of the favour and grace of the Lawgiver, it could not have obtained our pardon. Both must concur in order to this, the kindness and compassion of the being offended inducing him to accept *satisfaction*, and such a satisfaction as would render it morally fit and honourable in him to offer forgiveness. "By grace," therefore, we "are saved;" and nothing that Christ has done, renders us not deserving of punishment, or cancels our obligations as creatures and subjects, as a surety cancels the obligations of a debtor, whose debt he pays for him. Forgiveness in God can, therefore, be no other than an act of high and distinguished mercy.

We are also to consider, even now that the atonement has been accepted, and the promise of forgiveness proclaimed, upon the conditions of repentance and faith, that we claim forgiveness not on the ground of

justice, but on that of the *faithfulness* of God, who has been pleased to bind himself by promises; and also that the mercy and grace of God are farther illustrated by his not proceeding to extremities against us upon our first refusals of his overtures, of which all are in some degree guilty. He exercises toward us, in all cases, "all long suffering," and calls us not hastily to account for our neglect of the Gospel, any more than for the infractions of his law, both which he might do, were his government severe and his mercy reluctant.

But abundantly as the objection may thus be answered, it is not to be satisfactorily refuted, on the Antinomian principle, that Christ paid our debt, in the sense of yielding to the law, in *kind* and in *quantity*, those acts of obedience, or that penalty of suffering, or both, which the law required. The matter in that case, on the part of the Father, loses its character of *grace*, and is reduced to a strictly equitable proceeding; or at least the mercy is of no higher a kind than is the mercy of a creditor who accepts the full amount of his debt from the surety instead of the debtor, which is assuredly much below that *love* of the Father, to which allusions so admiring and so grateful are often made in the New Testament. The consequences, also, become absurd and wholly contradictory to the Scriptures; and such a view of the satisfaction of Christ is inconsistent with conditions of pardon and acceptance; for if the debt is in this sense actually tendered and accepted, on what ground can conditions of release stand? It is, therefore, consistent in the Antinomian scheme, to deny all conditions of pardon and acceptance, and to make repentance and faith merely the means through which men come to the knowledge of their previous and eternal election. By them, as fulfilled conditions, their relation to God is not changed, so that from guilty and condemned criminals they become sons of God. Such they were previous to faith, and previous even to birth, and thus the Scripture is contradicted, which represents believers before repentance and faith, to be "the children of wrath, even as others." That passage also in Galatians loses its meaning, "we have believed in Jesus Christ, THAT we might be justified by the faith of Christ."

With such explanations of the terms of the first of the two opinions on the satisfaction of Christ, above given, it may be taken as fully accordant with the doctrine of the New Testament on this important subject.

Another remark may here be in its proper place. It has been sometimes said by theologians, sufficiently sound in their general views of the doctrine of the atonement, that we know not the *vinculum*, or bond of connection, between the sufferings of Christ, and the pardon of sin, and this, therefore, they place among the mysteries of religion. To me this appears rather to arise from obscure views of the atonement than from the absence of information on this point in the Scriptures themselves. Mysteries of love and incomprehensible facts are found, it is true, in

the incarnation, humiliation, and sufferings of our Lord: but the *vinculum*, or connection of those sufferings appears to be matter of express revelation, when it is declared that the death of Christ was "a demonstration of the righteousness of God," of his righteous character and his just administration, and therefore allowed the honourable exercise of mercy without impeachment of justice, or any repeal or relaxation of his laws. If it be meant, in this allegation of mystery, that it is not discoverable how the death of Christ is as adequate a display of the justice of God, as though offenders had been personally punished, this also is clearly in opposition to what the apostle has said, in the passage which has been so often referred to, "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness," εις ενδειξιν της δικαιοσυνης αυτου, *for a demonstration*, or MANIFESTATION *of his righteousness;* nor surely can the particulars before stated in explanation of this point, be well weighed, without our perceiving how gloriously the holiness and essential rectitude of God, as well as his rectoral justice, were illustrated by this proceeding; this, surely, is manifestation, not mystery.

For, generally speaking, it cannot be a matter of difficulty to conceive how the authority of a law may be upheld, and the justice of its administration made manifest, even when its penalty is exacted in some other way than the punishment of the party offending. When the Locrian legislator voluntarily suffered the loss of one of his eyes, to save that of his son condemned by his own statutes to lose both, and did this that the law might neither be repealed nor exist without efficacy; who does not see that the authority of his laws was as much, nay more, impressively sanctioned than if his son had endured the full penalty? The case, it is true, has in it nothing parallel to the work of Christ, except in that particular which it is here adduced to illustrate; but it shows that it is not, in all cases, necessary for the upholding of a firm government that the offender himself should be punished. This is the natural mode of maintaining authority; but not, in all cases, the only one; and, in that of the redemption of man, we see the wisdom of God in its brightest manifestation securing this end, and yet opening to man the door of hope. The strict justice of the case required that the righteous character of the Divine administration should be upheld; but, in fact, by the sufferings of our Lord being made the only means of pardon, it has received a stamp more legible and impressive than the extreme punishment of offenders, however awful, while it connects love with justice, and presents God to us at once exact in righteousness and affectingly gracious and merciful. "The Judge himself bore the punishment of transgression, while he published an amnesty to the guilty, and thus asserted the authority, and importance, and worth of the law by that very act which beamed forth love unspeakable, and displayed a

compassion which knew no obstacle but the unwillingness of the criminals to accept it. The eternal Word became flesh, and exhibited, in sufferings and in death, that combination of holiness and mercy which, believed, must excite love, and, if loved, must produce resemblance." (*Erskine on Revealed Religion.*) "Mercy and truth meet together, righteousness and peace kiss each other." Thus the *vinculum*, that which connects the death of Christ with our salvation, is simply the security which it gives to the righteous administration of the Divine government.

An objection is made by the opponents of the doctrine of atonement to the justice of laying the punishment of the guilty upon the innocent, which it will be necessary briefly to consider. The objection resolves itself into an inquiry how far such benevolent interpositions of one person for another, as involve sacrifice and suffering, may go without violating justice; and when the subject is followed in this direction, the objection will be found to be of no weight.

That it has always been held a virtue to endure inconveniences, to encounter danger, and even to suffer for the sake of others, in certain circumstances, cannot be denied, and no one has ever thought of controlling such acts by raising any questions as to their justice. Parents and friends not only endure labour and make sacrifices for their children and connections, but often submit to positive pain in accomplishing that to which their affection prompts them. To save a fellow creature perishing by water or fire, generous minds often expose themselves to great personal risk of life, and even sometimes perish in the attempt; yet the claims of humanity are considered sufficient to justify such deeds, which are never blamed, but always applauded. No man's life we grant, is at his own disposal; but in all cases where it is agreed that God, the only being who has a right to dispose of life, has left men at liberty to offer their lives for the benefit of others, no one questions the justice of their doing it. Thus, when a patriot army marches to almost certain destruction to defend its coasts from foreign invasion and violence, the established notion that the life of every man is placed by God at the disposal of his country, justifies the hazard. It is still a clearer instance, because matter of revelation, that there are cases in which we *ought* "to lay down our lives for the brethren," that is for the Church and the interests of religion in the world. Christians are called to pursue their duty of instructing, and reforming, and saving others, though, in some cases, the active services into which they may be led will shorten life; and in times of persecution it is obligatory upon them not only to be ready to suffer, but to die, rather than deny Christ. No one questions the justice of this, because all see that the Author and Lord of the lives of men has given to them the right of thus disposing of life, nor do we ever hear it urged, that it was unjust in him to require

them to submit to the pain of racks and fires, and other modes of violent death, which they certainly did not deserve, and when, as to any crime meriting public and ignominious death, they were, doubtless, innocent. These cases are not adduced as parallel to the death of Christ for sinners; but so far they agree with it that, in the ordinary course of providence, and by express appointment of God, men suffer and even die for the benefit of others, and in some cases the morally worthy, the comparatively innocent, die for the instruction, and, instrumentally, for the salvation of the unworthy and vicious. There is a similarity in the two cases also in other particulars, as that the suffering danger or death is in both matter of choice, not of compulsion or necessity; and that there is a *right* in the parties to choose suffering and death, though, as we shall see, this right in benevolent men is of a different kind to that with which Christ was invested.

Some writers of great eminence on the doctrine of atonement have urged also, in answer to the objection before us, the suffering of persons in consequence of the sins of others, as children on account of the crimes of their parents, both by the natural constitution of things and by the laws of many states; but the subject does not appear to derive any real illustration from these examples; for, as a modern writer well observes, "the principles upon which the Catholic opinion is defended destroy every kind of similarity between these cases and the sufferings of Christ. In all such instances of the extension of punishment, persons suffer for sins of which they are innocent, but without their consent, in consequence of a constitution under which they are born, and by a disposition of events which they probably lament; and their suffering is not supposed to have any effect in alleviating the evils incurred by those whose punishment they bear." (*Hill's Lectures.*)

In all the cases mentioned above, as most in point in this argument, we grant that there is no instance of satisfaction by vicarious punishment; no legal substitution of one person for another. With respect to human governments, they could not justly adopt this principle in any case. They could not oblige an innocent person to suffer for the guilty, because that would be unjust to him; they could not accept his offer, were he ever so anxious to become the substitute of another, for that would be unjust to God, since they have no authority from him so to take away the life of one of his creatures, and the person himself has no authority to offer it. With respect to the Divine government, a parallel case is also impossible, because no guilty man could be the substitute for his fellows, his own life being forfeited; and no higher *creature* could be that substitute, of which we are fully assured by this, that if it was necessary that Christ, who is infinitely above all creatures, should suffer for us, in order that God might be just in justifying the guilty, then his justice could not have been manifested by the interposi-

tion of any creature whatever in our behalf, and, therefore, the legal obstacle to our pardon must have remained in full force. There can be no full parallel to this singular and only case; but yet, as to the question of justice, which is here the only point under consideration, it rests on the same principles as those before mentioned. In the case of St. Paul we see a willing sufferer; he chooses to suffer and to die "for the elect's sake," and that he might publish the Gospel to the world. He knew that this would be his lot, and he glories in the prospect. He gave up cheerfully what might have remained to him of life by the constitution of nature. Was it, then, unjust in God to accept this offering of generous devotedness for the good of mankind, when the offering was in obedience to his own will? Certainly not. Was it an unjust act toward God, that is, did it violate the right of God over his life, for St. Paul to choose to die for the Gospel? Certainly not. For God had given to him the right of thus disposing of his life, by making it his duty to die for the truth. The same considerations of choice and right unite in the sufferings of our Lord, though the case itself was one of an infinitely higher nature, a circumstance which strengthens but does not change the principle. He was a *willing* substitute, and choice was in him abundantly more free and unbiassed than it could be in a creature, and for this reason, that he was not a creature. His incarnation was voluntary; and, when incarnate, his sufferings were still a matter of choice; nor was he, in the same sense as his disciples, under the power of men. "No man taketh my life from me; but I lay it down of myself." He had the right of doing so in a sense that no creature could have. He died not only because the Father willed it; not because the right of living or dying had been conceded to him as a moral trust, as in the case of the apostles; but because, having himself the supreme power of life and death, from his boundless benevolence to man, he willed to die; and thus was there, in this substitution, a concurrence of the Lawgiver, and the consent of the substitute. To say that any thing is *unjust*, is to say that the rights of some one are invaded; but if, in this case, no right was invaded, than which nothing can be more clear, then was there in the case nothing of injustice as assumed in the objection. The whole resolves itself, therefore, into a question not of *justice*, but of the *wisdom* of admitting a substitute to take the place of the guilty. In the circumstances, first of the willingness of the substitute to submit to the penalty, and secondly of his right thus to dispose of himself, the justice of the proceeding is fully cleared; and the question of wisdom is to be determined by this consideration, whether the *end* of punishment could be as well answered by this translation of the penalty to a substitute as if the principals themselves had personally been held to undergo it. This, when the whole evangelical scheme is taken into account, embracing the means and conditions by which that

substitution is made available, and the concomitants by which it is attended, as before explained, is also obvious—the law of God is not repealed nor relaxed, but established; those who continue disobedient fall into aggravated condemnation, and those who avail themselves of the mercy of God thus conceded, are restored to the capacity and disposition of obedience, and that perfectly and eternally in a future state of existence; so that, as the end of punishment is the maintenance of the authority of law and the character of the Lawgiver, this end is even more abundantly accomplished by this glorious interposition of the compassion and adorable wisdom of God our Saviour.

So unfounded is this objection to the doctrine of the vicarious sufferings of Christ; to which we may add, that the difficulty of reconciling those sufferings to the Divine justice does not, in truth, lie with us, but with the Socinians. Different opinions, as to the nature and end of those sufferings, neither lessen nor heighten them. The extreme and emphatic sufferings of our Lord is a fact which stands unalterably upon the record of the inspired history. We who regard Christ as suffering by virtue of a voluntary substitution of himself in our room and stead, can account for such agonies, and, by the foregoing arguments, can reconcile them to justice; but, as our Lord was perfectly and absolutely innocent, as "he did no sin," and was, in this respect, distinguished from all men who ever lived, and who have all sinned, by being entirely "holy and harmless," "*separated* from sinners," how will they reconcile it to Divine justice that he should be thus as pre-eminent in suffering as he was in virtue, and when, according to them, he sustained a personal character only, and not a vicarious one? For this difficulty they have, and can have no rational solution.

As to the passage in Ezekiel xviii, 20, which Socinians sometimes urge against the doctrine of Christ's vicarious passion, it is briefly but satisfactorily answered by Grotius. "Socinus objects from Ezekiel, 'The soul that sinneth it shall die; the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son.' But in these words God does not teach us what he must necessarily do; but what [in a particular case] he had freely decreed to do. It no more, therefore, follows from hence, that it is unjust altogether for a son to bear any part of the punishment of his father's crime, than that it is unjust for a sinner not to die. The place itself evinces that God does not here treat of perpetual and immutable right; but of that ordinary course of his providence which he was determined hereafter to pursue with respect to the Jews, that he might cut off all occasion of complaint." (*De satisfactione.*)

CHAPTER XXI.

Redemption—Sacrifices of the Law.

It has, then, been established, upon the testimony of various texts, in which the doctrine is laid down, not in the language of metaphor and allusion, but clearly and expressly, that the death of Christ was vicarious and propitiatory; and that by it a satisfaction was offered to the Divine justice for the transgressions of men; in consideration of which pardon and salvation are offered to them in the Gospel through faith; and I have preferred to adduce these clear and cogent proofs of this great principle of our religion, in the first place, from those passages in the New Testament, in which there are no sacrificial terms, no direct allusions to the atonements of the law, and other parts of the Levitical piacular system, to show that, independent of the latter class of texts, the doctrine may be established against the Socinians; and, also, that by having first settled the meaning of the leading passages, we may more satisfactorily determine the sense in which the evangelists and apostles use the sacrificial terms of the Old Testament, with reference to the death of Christ, a subject in which, from its nature, the opponents of the atonement, find a freedom of remark and license of criticism, by which they are apt to mislead and perplex the unwary. This second class of texts, however, when approached by the light of the argument already made good, and exhibited also in that of their own evidence, will afford the most triumphant refutation of the notions of those who, to their denial of the Godhead of our Lord, add a proud and Pharisaic rejection of the sacrificial efficacy of his death.

We shall not, in the first instance, advert to the sacrifices under the patriarchal dispensation, as to the origin of which a difference of opinion exists, a subject on which some remarks will be offered in the sequel. Among the Jews, sacrifices were unquestionably of Divine original; and as terms taken from them are found applied so frequently to Christ and to his sufferings in the New Testament, they serve farther to explain that peculiarity under which, as we have seen, the apostles regarded the death of Christ, and afford additional proof that it was considered by them as a sacrifice of expiation, as the grand universal sin offering for the whole world.

He is announced by John, his forerunner, as "the Lamb of God;" and that not with reference to meekness or any other moral virtue; but with an accompanying phrase, which would communicate to a Jew the full sacrificial sense of the term employed—"the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." He is called "our passover, sacrificed for us." He is said to have given "himself for us, an

OFFERING and A SACRIFICE to GOD, for a sweet-smelling savour." As a Priest, it was necessary he should have somewhat to offer; and he offered himself, "his own blood," to which is ascribed the washing away of sin, and our eternal redemption. He is declared to have "put away sin by the SACRIFICE OF HIMSELF," to have "BY HIMSELF purged our sins," to have "SANCTIFIED the people by his own blood," to have "offered to GOD one SACRIFICE FOR SINS." Add to these, and innumerable other similar expressions and allusions, the argument of the apostle in the Epistle to the Hebrews, in which, by proving at length, that the sacrifice of Christ was superior in efficacy to the sacrifices of the law, he most unequivocally assumes, that the death of Christ was a sacrifice and sin offering, for without that it would no more have been capable of comparison with the sacrifices of the law, than the death of John the Baptist, St. Stephen, or St. James, all martyrs and sufferers for the truth, who had recently sealed their testimony with their blood. This very comparison, we may boldly affirm, is utterly unaccountable and absurd on any hypothesis which denies the sacrifice of Christ; for what *relation* could his death have to the Levitical immolations and offerings, if it had no sacrificial character? Nothing could, in fact, be more misleading, and even absurd, than to apply those terms, which, both among Jews and Gentiles, were in use to express the various processes and means of atonement and piacular propitiation, if the apostles and Christ himself did not intend to represent his death strictly as an expiation for sin:—*misleading*, because such would be the natural and necessary inference from the terms themselves, which had acquired this as their established meaning; and *absurd*, because if, as Socinians say, they used them metaphorically, there was not even an ideal resemblance between the figure, and that which it was intended to illustrate. So totally irrelevant, indeed, will those terms appear to any notion entertained of the death of Christ which excludes its expiatory character, that to assume that our Lord and his apostles used them as metaphors, is profanely to assume them to be such writers as would not in any other case be tolerated; writers wholly unacquainted with the commonest rules of elocution, and therefore wholly unfit to be teachers of others, not only in religion but in things of inferior importance.

The use of such terms, we have said, would not only be wholly absurd, but criminally misleading to the Gentiles, as well as to the Jews, who were first converted to Christianity. To them the notion of propitiatory offerings, offerings to avert the displeasure of the gods, and which expiated the crimes of offenders, was most familiar, and the corresponding terms in constant use. The bold denial of this by Dr. Priestley might well bring upon him the reproof of Archbishop Magee, who, after establishing this point from the Greek and Latin writers, observes, "So clearly does their language announce the notion of a *pro-*

pitiatory atonement, that if we would avoid an imputation on Dr. Priestley's fairness, we are driven, of necessity, to question the extent of his acquaintance with those writers." The reader may consult the instances given by this writer, in No. 5 of his Illustrations appended to his Discourses on the Atonement; and particularly the tenth chapter of Grotius's De Satisfactione, whose learning has most amply illustrated and firmly settled this view of the heathen sacrifices. The use to be made of this in the argument is, that as the apostles found the very terms they used with reference to the nature and efficacy of the death of Christ, fixed in an expiatory signification among the Greeks, they could not, in honesty, use them in a distant figurative sense, much less in a contrary one, without due notice of their having invested them with a new import being given to their readers. From αγος, a pollution, an impurity, which was to be expiated by sacrifice, are derived αγνιζω and αγιαζω, which denote the act of expiation; καθαιρω too, to purify, cleanse, is applied to the effect of expiation; and ιλαζω denotes the method of propitiating the gods by sacrifice. These, and other words of similar import, are used by the authors of the Septuagint, and by the evangelists and apostles; but they give no notice of using them in any strange and altered sense; and when they apply them to the death of Christ, they must, therefore, be understood to use them in their received meaning.

In like manner the Jews had their expiatory sacrifices, and the terms and phrases used in them are, in like manner, employed by the apostles to characterize the death of their Lord; and they would have been as guilty of misleading their Jewish as their Gentile readers, had they employed them in a new sense, and without warning, which, unquestionably, they never gave.

The force of this has been felt, and as, in order to avoid it, the two points, the expiatory nature of the Jewish sacrifices and their typical signature have been questioned, it will be necessary to establish each.

As to the expiatory nature of the sacrifices of the law, it is not necessary to show that all the Levitical offerings were of this character. There were also offerings for persons and for things prescribed for purification, which were incidental; but even they grew out of the leading notion of expiatory sacrifice, and that legal purification which resulted from the forgiveness of sins. It is enough to show that the grand and eminent sacrifices of the Jews were strictly expiatory, and that by them the offerers were released from punishment and death, for which ends they were appointed by the Lawgiver.

When we speak, too, of vicarious sacrifice, we do not mean, either on the one hand, such a substitution as that the victim should bear the same quantum of pain and suffering as the offender himself; or, on the other, that it was put in the place of the offender as a mere symbolical act, by which he confessed his desert of punishment; but a substitution

made by Divine appointment, by which the victim was exposed to sufferings and death instead of the offender, in virtue of which the offender himself should be released. In this view one can scarcely conceive why so able a writer as Archbishop Magee should prefer to use the term "vicarious *import*," rather than the simple and established term "vicarious;" since the Antinomian notion of substitution may be otherwise sufficiently guarded against, and the phrase "vicarious *import*" is certainly capable of being resolved into that figurative notion of mere symbolical action, which, however plausible, does, in fact, deprive the ancient sacrifices of their *typical*, and the oblation of Christ of its *real* efficacy. Vicarious acting, is acting for another; vicarious suffering, is suffering for another; but the nature and circumstances of that suffering in the case of Christ, is to be determined by the doctrine of Scripture at large, and not wholly by the term itself, which is, however, useful for this purpose, (and therefore to be preserved,) that it indicates the sense in which those who use it understand the declaration of Scripture, that Christ "died FOR us," to be that he died not merely *for our benefit*, but *in our stead*; in other words, that but for his having died, those who believe in him would personally have suffered that death which is the penalty of every violation of the law of GOD.

That sacrifices under the law were expiatory and vicarious, admits of abundant proof.

The chief objections made to this doctrine, are, first, that under the law, in all capital cases, the offender, upon legal proof or conviction, was doomed to die, and that no sacrifice could exempt him from the penalty. Secondly, that in all lower cases to which the law had not attached capital punishment, but pecuniary mulcts, or personal labour or servitude, upon their non-payment, this penalty was to be strictly executed, and none could plead any privilege or exemption on account of sacrifice; and that when sacrifices were ordained with a pecuniary mulct, they are to be regarded in the light of *fine*, one part of which was paid to the state, the other to the Church. This was the mode of argument adopted by the author of "the Moral Philosopher," and nothing of weight has been added to these objections since.

Now much of this may be granted, without any prejudice to the argument; and, indeed, is no more than the most orthodox writers on this subject have often adverted to. The law, under which the Jews were placed, was at once, as to them, both a *moral* and a *political* law; and the Lawgiver excepted certain offences from the benefit of a pardon, which implied exemption from temporal death, which was the state penalty, and therefore would accept no atonement for such transgressions. Blasphemy, idolatry, murder, and adultery, were those "presumptuous sins" which were thus exempted, and the reason will be seen in the political relation of the people to GOD. In refusing this

exemption from punishment in this world, in certain cases, respect was had to the order and benefit of *society*. Running parallel, however, with this political application of the law to the Jews as *subjects* of the theocracy, we see the authority of the moral law kept over them as men and creatures; and if these "presumptuous sins," of blasphemy and idolatry, of murder and adultery, and a few others, were the only *capital* crimes, considered *politically*, they were not the only capital crimes, considered morally, that is, there were other crimes which would have subjected the offender to death, but for this provision of expiatory oblations. The true question then is, whether such sacrifices were appointed by God, and accepted instead of the *personal* punishment or LIFE of the offender, which otherwise would have been forfeited, as in the other cases; and if so, if the life of animal sacrifices was accepted instead of the life of man, then the notion that they were mere mulcts and pecuniary penalties falls to the ground, and the *vicarious* nature of most of the Levitical oblations is established.

That other offences, beside those above mentioned, were capital, that is, exposed the offender to death, is clear from this, that all offences against the law had this capital character. As death was the sanction of the commandment given to Adam, so every one who transgressed any part of the law of Moses became guilty of death; every man was *accursed*, that is, devoted to die, who "continued not in *all things* written in the book of the law;" "the man only that doeth these things shall *live* by them," was the rule; and it was, therefore, to redeem the offenders from this penalty that sacrifices were appointed. So, with reference to the great day of expiation, we read, "For on that day shall the priest make an atonement for you, to cleanse you, that you may be clean from *all your sins;* and this shall be an everlasting statute unto you, to make an atonement for the children of Israel for *all their sins*, once a year," Lev. xvi, 30–34.

To prove that this was the intention and effect of the annual sacrifices of the Jews, we need do little more than refer to Leviticus xvii, 10, 11, "I will set my face against that soul that eateth blood, and will cut him off from among his people. For the life of the flesh is in the blood; and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for YOUR SOULS: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for THE SOUL." Here the blood which is said to make atonement for the soul, is the blood of the victims, and to make an atonement for the soul, is the same as to be a ransom for the soul, as will appear by referring to Exodus xxx, 12–16, and to be a ransom for the soul, is to avert death. "They shall give every man a ransom for his soul unto the Lord, that there be no *plague* among them," by which their lives might be suddenly taken away. The "soul" is also here used obviously for the *life;* the blood, or the life, of the victims in all the sacrifices, was substituted for the *life*

of man, to preserve him from death, and the victims were therefore vicarious. (*Vide Outram de Sacrif.* lib. 1, c. xxii.)

The Hebrew word rendered atonement, כפר, signifying primarily *to cover, overspread*, has been the subject of some evasive criticisms. It comes, however, in the secondary sense to signify atonement, or propitiation, because the effect of that is to *cover*, or, in Scripture meaning, to obtain the forgiveness of offences. The Septuagint, also, renders it by ἱλάσκομαι, *to appease, to make propitious*. It is used, indeed, where the means of atonement are not of the sacrificial kind, but these "instances equally serve to evince the Scripture sense of the term, in cases of transgression, to be that of reconciling the offended Deity, by averting his displeasure; so that when the atonement for sin is said to be made by sacrifice, no doubt can remain, that the sacrifice was strictly a sacrifice of propitiation. Agreeably to this conclusion we find it expressly declared, in the several cases of piacular oblations for transgression of the Divine commands, that the sin for which atonement was made by those oblations, should be *forgiven*." (*Magee's Discourses*, vol. i, page 332.)

As the notion that the sacrifices of the law were not vicarious, but mere mulcts and fines, is overturned by the general appointment of *the blood to be an atonement for the souls*, the forfeited lives of men, so also is it contradicted by particular instances. Let us refer to Lev. v, 15, 16, "If a soul commit a trespass, and sin through ignorance, in the holy things of the Lord, he shall make amends for the harm that he hath done in the holy thing, and shall add a fifth part thereto, and shall give it to the priest." Here, indeed, is the proper "fine" for the trespass: but it is added, "he shall bring for his trespass unto the Lord, a ram without blemish, and the priest shall make atonement for him, with the ram of the trespass offering, and it shall be *forgiven* him." Thus, then, so far from the sacrifice being the *fine*, the fine is distinguished from it, and with the ram only was the atonement made *to the Lord* for his trespass. Nor can the ceremonies, with which the trespass and sin offerings were accompanied, agree with any notion but that of their vicarious character. The worshipper, conscious of his trespass, brought an animal, his own property, to the door of the tabernacle. This was not an eucharistical act, not a memorial of mercies received, but of sins committed. He laid his hands upon the head of the animal, the symbolical act of transfer of punishment, then slew it with his own hand, and delivered it to the priest, who burnt the fat and part of the animal upon the altar, and having sprinkled part of the blood upon the altar, and, in some cases, upon the offerer himself, poured the rest at the bottom of the altar. And thus, we are told, "the priest shall make an atonement for him, as concerning his sin, and it shall be forgiven him." So clearly is it made manifest by these actions, and by the description

of their nature and end, that the animal bore the punishment of the offender, and that by this appointment he was reconciled to God, and obtained the forgiveness of his offences.

An equally strong proof, that the life of the animal sacrifice was accepted in place of the life of man, is afforded by the fact, that atonement was required by the law to be made, by sin offerings and burnt offerings, for even bodily distempers and disorders. It is not necessary to the argument to explain the distinctions between these various oblations, (2) nor yet to inquire into the reason which required propitiation to be made for corporal infirmities, which, in many cases, could not be avoided. They were, however, thus connected with *sin* as the cause of all these disorders, and God, who had placed his residence among the Israelites, insisted upon a perfect ceremonial purity, to impress upon them a sense of his moral purity, and the necessity of purification of mind. Whether these were the reasons, or whatever other reason there might be in the case, and whether it is at all discoverable by us, all such unclean persons were liable to death, and were exempted from it only by animal sacrifices. This appears from the conclusion to all the Levitical directions concerning the ceremonial to be followed in all such cases. Lev. xv, 31, "Thus shall ye separate the children of Israel from their uncleanness; THAT THEY DIE NOT in (or by) their uncleanness, when *they defile my tabernacle which is among them.*" So that by virtue of the sin offerings, the children of Israel were saved from a *death*, which otherwise they would have suffered for their uncleanness, and that by substituting the life of the animal for the life of the offerer. Nor can it be urged, that death is, in these instances, threatened only as a punishment of not observing these laws of purification, for the reason given in the passage just quoted, for the threatening of death is not hypothetical upon their not bringing the prescribed atonement, but is grounded upon the fact of "defiling the tabernacle of the Lord, which was among them," which is supposed to be done by all uncleanness as such, in the first instance.

As a farther proof of the vicarious character of the principal sacrifices of the Mosaic economy, we may instance those statedly offered for the whole congregation. Every day were offered two lambs, one in the morning, and the other in the evening, "for a continual burnt offering." To these daily victims were to be added, weekly, two other lambs for the burnt offering of every Sabbath. None of these could be considered in the light of fines for offences, since they were offered for no particular persons, and must be considered, therefore, unless resolved into an unmeaning ceremony, piacular and vicarious. To pass over, however, the monthly sacrifices, and those offered at the great feasts, it is suffi-

(2) On this subject, see Outram De Sacrificiis.

cient to fix upon those which are so often alluded to in the Epistle to the Hebrews, offered on the solemn anniversary of expiation. On that day, to other prescribed sacrifices, were to be added another ram for a burnt offering, and another goat, the most eminent of all the sacrifices, for a sin offering, whose blood was to be carried by the high priest into the inner sanctuary, which was not done by the blood of any other victim, except the bullock, which was offered the same day as a sin offering for the family of Aaron. "The circumstances of this ceremony, whereby atonement was to be made '*for all the sins*' of the whole Jewish people, are so strikingly significant that they deserve a particular detail. On the day appointed for this general expiation, the priest is commanded to offer a bullock and a goat, as sin offerings, the one for himself, and the other for the people, and having sprinkled the blood of these, in due form, before the mercy seat, to lead forth a second goat, denominated the scape goat; and after laying both his hands upon the head of the scape goat, and confessing over him all the iniquities of the people, to *put them upon the head* of the goat, and to send the animal, thus bearing the sins of the people, away into the wilderness; in this manner expressing, by an action which cannot be misunderstood, that the *atonement*, which it is affirmed was to be effected by the sacrifice of the sin offering, consisted in removing from the people their iniquities by this translation of them to the animal. For it is to be remarked, that the ceremony of the scape goat is not a distinct one; it is a continuation of the process, and is evidently the concluding part, and symbolical consummation of the sin offering. So that the transfer of the iniquities of the people upon the head of the scape goat, and the bearing them away into the wilderness, manifestly imply, that the atonement effected by the sacrifice of the sin offering consisted in the transfer, and consequent removal of those iniquities." (*Magee's Discourses.*)

How, then, is this impressive and singular ceremonial to be explained? Shall we resort to the notion of mulcts and fines? but if so, then this and other *stated* sacrifices must be considered in the light of *penal* enactments. But this cannot agree with the appointment of such sacrifices annually in succeeding generations—"this shall be a statute for ever unto you." The law appoints a certain day in the year for expiating the sins both of the high priest himself and of the whole congregation, and that for all high priests, and all generations of the congregation. Now, could a law be enacted, inflicting a *certain* penalty, at a *certain* time, upon a whole people, as well as upon their high priest, thus *presuming* upon their actual transgression of it? The sacrifice was also for sins in *general*, and yet the *penalty*, if it were one, is not greater than individual persons were often obliged to undergo for single trespasses. Nothing, certainly, can be more absurd than this hypothesis. (*Vide Chapman's Eusebius.*)

Shall we account for it by saying, that sacrifices were offered *for the benefit* of the worshipper, but exclude the notion of expiation? But here we are obliged to confine the benefit to *reconciliation* and the *taking away of sins*, and that by the appointed means of *the shedding of blood*, and the presentation of blood in the holy place, accompanied by the expressive ceremony of imposition of hands upon the head of the victim, the import of which act is fixed beyond all controversy, by the priest's confessing, at the same time, over that victim, the sins of all the people, and imprecating upon its head the vengeance due to them, Lev. xvi, 21.

Shall we content ourselves with merely saying that this was a symbol; but the question remains of what was it the symbol? To determine that, let the several parts of the symbolic action be enumerated. Here is confession of sin—confession before God, at the door of his tabernacle—the substitution of a victim—the figurative transfer of sins to that victim—the shedding of blood, which God appointed to make atonement for the soul—the carrying the blood into the holiest place, the very permission of which clearly marked the Divine acceptance—the bearing away of iniquity—and the actual reconciliation of the people to God. If, then, this is symbolical, it has nothing correspondent with it; it never had or can have any thing correspondent to it but the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ, and the communication of the benefits of his passion in the forgiveness of sins to those that believe in him, and their reconciliation with God.

Shall we, finally, say, that those sacrifices had respect not to God to obtain pardon by expiation; but to the offerer, teaching him moral lessons, and calling forth moral dispositions? We answer, that this hypothesis leaves many of the *essential* circumstances of the ceremonial wholly unaccounted for. The tabernacle and temple were erected for the residence of God, by his own command. There it was his will to be approached, and to these sacred places the victims were required to be brought. Any where else they might as well have been offered, if they had had respect only to the offerer; but they were required to be brought *to God*, to be offered according to a prescribed ritual, and by an order of men appointed for that purpose. "But there is no other reason why they should be offered in the sanctuary, than this, that they were offered to the inhabitant of the sanctuary; nor could they be offered to him without having respect to him, or without his being the object of their efficacy, as in the case of solemn prayers addressed to him. There were some victims whose blood, on the day of atonement, was to be carried into the inner sanctuary; but for what purpose can we suppose the blood to have been carried into the most sacred part of the Divine residence, and that on the day of atonement, except to obtain the favour of him in whose presence it was sprinkled?" (*Outram De*

Sacrificiis.) To this we may add, that the reason given for these sacred services is not in any case a mere moral effect to be produced upon the minds of the worshippers; they were to make atonement, that is, to avert God's displeasure, that the people might not "DIE."

We may find also another most explicit illustration in the sacrifice of the passover. The sacrificial character of this offering is strongly marked; for it was, CORBAN, an offering brought to the tabernacle; it was slain in the sanctuary, and the blood sprinkled upon the altar by the priests. It derives its name from the *passing over*, and sparing the houses of the Israelites, on the door posts of which the blood of the immolated lamb was sprinkled, when the first born in the houses of the Egyptians were slain; and thus we have another instance of life being spared by the instituted means of animal sacrifice. Nor need we confine ourselves to particular instances—"almost all things," says an authority, who surely knew his subject, "are by the law purged with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no remission."

By their very law and by constant usage, then, were the Jews familiarized to the notion of expiatory sacrifice, as well as by the history contained in their sacred books, especially in Genesis, which speaks of the vicarious sacrifices offered by the patriarchs, and the book of Job, in which that patriarch is recorded to have offered sacrifices for the supposed sins of his sons, and Eliphaz is commanded by a Divine oracle, to offer a burnt offering for himself and his friends, "*lest God should deal with them after their folly.*"

On the sentiments of the uninspired Jewish writers on this point, the substitution of the life of the animal for that of the offerer, and, consequently, the expiatory nature of their sacrifices, *Outram* has given many quotations from their writings, which the reader may consult in his work on Sacrifices. Two or three only need be adduced by way of specimen. R. Levi Ben Gerson says, "the imposition of the hands of the offerers was designed to indicate, that their sins were removed from themselves, and transferred to the animal." Isaac Ben Arama—"he transfers his sins from himself, and lays them upon the head of his victim." R. Moses Ben Nachman says, with respect to a sinner offering a victim, "It was just that his blood should be shed, and that his body should be burned; but the Creator, of his mercy, accepted this victim from him, as his substitute and ransom; that the blood of the anima might be shed instead of his blood; that is, that the blood of the animal might be given for his life."

Full of these ideas of vicarious expiation, then, the apostles wrote and spoke, and the Jews of their time and in subsequent ages heard and read the books of the New Testament. The Socinian pretence is, that the inspired penmen used the sacrificial terms which occur in their writings figuratively, but we not only reply, as before, that they could

not do this honestly, unless they had given notice of this new application of the established terms of the Jewish theology; but that if this be assumed, their writings leave us wholly at a loss to discover what it really was which they intended to teach by these sacrificial terms and allusions. They are, themselves, utterly silent as to this, and the varying theories of those who reject the doctrine of atonement, in fact, confess that their writings afford no solution of the difficulty. If, therefore, it is blasphemous to suppose, on the one hand, that inspired men should write on purpose to mislead; so, on the other, is it utterly inconceivable that, had they only been ordinary writers, they should construct a figurative language out of terms which had a definite and established sense, without giving any intimation at all that they employed them otherwise than in their received meaning, or telling us why they adopted them at all, and more especially when they knew that they must be interpreted, both by Jews and Greeks, in a sense which, if the Socinians are right, was in direct opposition to that which they intended to convey.

This will, however, appear with additional evidence, when the typical, as well as the expiatory character of the legal sacrifices are considered. In strict argument, the latter does not depend upon the former, and if the oblations of the Mosaic institute had not been intentionally adumbrative of the one oblation of Christ, the argument, from their vicarious and expiatory character, would still have been valid. For if the legal sacrifices were offered in place of the offender, blood for blood, life for life, and if the death of Christ is represented to be, in as true a sense, a sacrifice and expiation, then is the doctrine of the New Testament writers, as to the expiatory character of the death of our Lord, explicitly established.

That the Levitical sacrifices were also TYPES, is another argument, and accumulates the already preponderating evidence.

A type, in the theological sense, is defined by systematic writers to be a sign or example, prepared and designed by GOD to prefigure some future thing. It is required that it should represent (though the degree of clearness may be very different in different instances) this future object, either by something which it has in common with it, or in being the symbol of some property which it possesses;—that it should be *prepared* and *designed* by God thus to represent its antitype, which circumstance distinguishes it from a simile, and from hieroglyphic;—that it should give place to the antitype so soon as the latter appears; and that the efficacy of the antitype should exist in the type in appearance only, or in a lower degree. (*Vide Outram De Sacrificiis.*) These may be considered as the general properties of a type.

Of this kind are the views given us, in the sacred Scriptures of the New Testament, of the Levitical dispensation, and of many events and examples of the Mosaic history. Thus St. Paul calls the meats and

drinks, the holy days, new moons, and sabbaths of the Jews, including in them the *services* performed in the celebration of these festivals, "a *shadow* of things to come;" "*the body*" of which shadow, whose form the shadow generally and faintly exhibited, "is Christ." Again, when speaking of the things which happened to the Israelites, in the wilderness, he calls them "ensamples" (τυποι) types, "written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come." In Hebrews x, 1, the same apostle, when he discourses expressly on the "sacrifices" of the tabernacle, calls them "the *shadow* of good things to come," and places them in contrast with "the *very image* of the things," that is, the "good things" just before mentioned; and, in the preceding chapter, he tells us that the services performed in the tabernacle prefigured what was afterward to be transacted in the heavenly sanctuary. These instances are sufficient for the argument, and, in examining them, we may observe, that if the things here alluded to are not allowed to be types, then they are used as mere illustrative rhetorical illustrations, and in their original institution had no more reference to the facts and doctrines of the Christian system than the sacrificial services of pagan temples, which might, in some particulars, upon this hypothesis, just as well have served the apostle's purpose. But if, upon examination, this notion of their being used merely as rhetorical illustrations be contradicted by the passages themselves, then the true typical character of these events and ceremonies may be considered as fairly established.

With respect to the declaration of St. Paul, that the punishments inflicted upon the disobedient and unfaithful Israelites in the wilderness were "*types* written for our admonition," it is only to be explained by considering the history of that people as *designedly*, and, by appointment, typical. These things happened for *types;* and that, by types, the apostle means much more than a general admonitory correspondence between disobedience and punishment, which many other circumstances might just as well have afforded; he adds, that "they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come," that is, for the admonition of Christians who had entered into the obligations of the new dispensation. For this *purpose* they were recorded; by this act of God they were made types in the highest sense; and could not become types in the sense of mere figurative illustration, which would have been contingent upon this rhetorical use being made of them by some subsequent writer. This is farther confirmed also by the preceding verses, in which the apostle calls the manna "*spiritual* meat," which can only be understood of it as being a type of the bread which came down from heaven, even Christ, who, in allusion to the same fact, so designates himself. The "rock," too, is called the *spiritual* rock, and that rock, adds the apostle, "*was Christ;*" but in what conceivable meaning, except as it was an *appointed* type of him?

This is St. Paul's general description of the typical character of "the Church in the wilderness." In the other passages quoted, he adduces, in particular, the Levitical services. He calls the ceremonial of the law "*a shadow*," (σκια;) in the Epistle to the Colossians, he opposes this shadow to "*the body*;" in that to the Hebrews, to "*the very image*;" by which he obviously means the reality of "the good things" adumbrated, or their essential form or substance. Now whether we take the word σκια for the shadow of the body of man; or for a faint delineation, or sketch, to be succeeded by a finished picture, it is clear, that whatever the law was, it was by Divine appointment; and as there is a relation between the shadow and the body which produces it, and the sketch or outline and the finished picture, so if, by Divine appointment, the law was this shadow of good things to come, which is what the apostle asserts, then there was an intended relation of one to the other, quite independent of the figurative and rhetorical use which might be made of a mere accidental comparison. If the apostle speaks figuratively only, then the law is to be supposed to have no *appointed* relation to the Gospel, as a shadow or sketch of good things to come, and this relation is one of imagination only; if the relation was a designed and an appointed one, then the resolution of the apostle's words into figurative allusion cannot be maintained. But, farther, the apostle grounds an argument upon these types; an argument, too, of the most serious kind; an argument for renouncing the law and embracing the Gospel. upon the penalty of eternal danger to the soul: no absurdity can, therefore, be greater than to suppose him to argue so weighty and important a question upon a relation of one thing to another existing only in the imagination, and not appointed by God; and if the relation was so appointed, it is of that instituted and adumbrative kind which constitutes a type in its special and theological sense.

Of this *appointment* and *designation* of the tabernacle service to be a shadow of good things to come, the ninth chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews affords several direct and unequivocal declarations. So verse seven and eight, "But into the second went the high priest alone, once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people; the HOLY GHOST SIGNIFYING this (*showing, declaring* by this type) that the way into the holiest of all was not YET made manifest." Here we have the *declaration* of a doctrine by type. which is surely very different to the figurative use of a fact, employed to embellish and enforce an argument by a subsequent writer, and this is also referred to the design and intention of the "Holy Ghost" himself, at the time when the Levitical ritual was prescribed, and this typical declaration was to continue until the new dispensation should be introduced. In verse nine, the tabernacle itself is called a figure or parable: "Which was a figure (παραβολη) for the time then present." It

was a *parable* by which the evangelical and spiritual doctrines were taught; it was an *appointed* parable, because limited to a certain time, "*for the time then present*," that is, until the bringing in of the things signified, to which it had this *designed* relation. Again, verse 23, "the things under the law" are called "*patterns* (representations) of things in the heavens;" and in verse 24, the holy places made with hands are denominated "the figures," (*antitypes*) "of the true." Were they then representations and antitypes only in St. Paul's imagination, or in reality and by appointment? Read his argument: "It was *necessary*, that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves, with better sacrifices than these." On the hypothesis that sacrificial terms and allusions are employed figuratively only by the apostle, what kind of argument, we may ask, is this? On what does the common *necessity* of the purification, both of the earthly and the heavenly tabernacle, by sacrifices, though different in their degree of value and efficacy, rest? Could the apostle say that this was necessary, to afford him a figurative embellishment in writing his epistle? The necessity is clearly grounded upon the relation *instituted* by the Author of the Levitical economy himself; the heavenly places were not to be entered by sinners, but through the blood of "better sacrifices;" and to teach this doctrine early to mankind, it was "*necessary*" to purify the earthly tabernacle, and thus give the people access to it only by the blood of the inferior sacrifices, that both they and the tabernacle might be the types of evangelical and heavenly things, and that they might be taught the only means of obtaining access to the tabernacle in heaven. There was, therefore, in setting up these "*patterns*," an intentioned adumbration of these future things, and hence the word used is υποδειγμα, the import of which is shown in chapter viii, 5, where it is associated with the term, the *shadow* of heavenly things,—"who serve unto the *example* and shadow of heavenly things," or "these" *priests* "perform the service with a *representation* and shadow of the heavenly things."

The sacrificial ceremonies, then, of the Levitical institute, are clearly established to be typical, and have all the characters which constitute a type in the received theological sense. They are represented by St. Paul, in the passages which have been under consideration, as adumbrative; as designed and appointed to be so by God; as having respect to things future, to Christ and to his sacerdotal ministry; as being inferior in efficacy to the antitypes which correspond to them, the "better sacrifices," of which he speaks; and they were all displaced by the antitype, the Levitical ceremony being repealed by the death and ascension of our Lord.

Since, then, both the *expiatory* and the *typical* characters of the Jewish sacrifices were so clearly held by the writers of the New Testament, there can be no rational doubt as to the sense in which they apply sac-

sacrificial terms and allusions, to describe the nature and effect of the death of Christ. As the offering of the animal sacrifice took away sin, that is, obtained remission for offences against the law, we can be at no loss to know what the Baptist means, when, pointing to Christ, he exclaims, "Behold the Lamb of God, which *taketh away* the sin of the world." As there was a transfer of suffering and death, from the offender to the legally clean and sound victim, so Christ died, "the *just* for the *unjust*;" as the animal sacrifice was expiating, so Christ is our ἱλασμος, propitiation, or expiation; as by the Levitical oblations men were *reconciled* to God, so "we, when enemies, were *reconciled* to God by the death of his Son;" as under the law, "without shedding of blood there was no remission," so, as to Christ, we are "justified by his blood," and have "redemption through his blood, the remission of sins;" as by the blood of the appointed sacrifices, the holy places, made with hands, were made accessible to the Jewish worshippers, that blood, being carried into them, and sprinkled by the high priest, so "Christ entered once, *with his own blood into the holy place*, having obtained eternal redemption for us," and has thus opened for us a "new and living way" into the celestial sanctuary; as the blood of the Mosaic oblations was the blood of the Old Testament, so, he himself says, "this is my blood of the New Testament, shed for the remission of sins;" as it was a part of the sacrificial solemnity, in some instances, to feast upon the victim; so, with direct reference to this, our Lord also declares that he would give his own "*flesh* for the life of the world;" and that "whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life; for my flesh is meat INDEED, and my blood is drink INDEED;" that is, it is in *truth* and *reality* what the flesh and blood of the Jewish victims were in *type*.

The instances of this use of sacrificial terms are, indeed, almost innumerable, and enough, I trust, has been said to show that they could not be employed in a merely figurative sense; nevertheless there are two or three passages in which they occur as the basis of an argument which depends upon taking them in the received sense, with a brief consideration of which we may conclude this part of the subject.

When St. Paul, in writing to the Corinthians, says, "for he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin," or "him who knew no sin, he hath made to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him," he concludes a discourse upon our reconciliation to God, and lays this down as the general principle upon which that reconciliation, of which he has been speaking, is to be explained and enforced. Here, then, the question is, in what sense Christ was MADE SIN for us. Not, certainly, as to the *guilt* of it; for it is expressly said, that "he knew no sin;" but as to the expiation of it, by his personal sufferings, by which he delivers the guilty from punishment. For the phrase is manifestly taken from the sin offerings of the Old Testament,

which are there sometimes called "*sins*," as being offerings for sin, and because the animals sacrificed represented the sinners themselves. Thus, Lev. iv, 21, the heifer to be offered, is called, in our translation, more agreeably to our idiom, "a sin offering for the congregation;" but, in the LXX, it is denominated "THE SIN of the congregation." So, also, in verse 29, as to the red heifer which was to be offered for the sin of private persons, the person offending was "to lay his hand upon the head of *the sin offering*," as we rightly interpret it; but, in the LXX, "upon the head of his SIN," agreeably to the Hebrew word, which signifies indifferently either sin or the offering for it. Thus, again, in Lev. vi, 25, "This is the law of the *sin offering*," in the Greek, "This is the law of *sin*;" which also has, "they shall slay the SINS before the Lord," for the sin offerings. The Greek of the Apostle Paul is thus easily explained by that of the LXX, and affords a natural exposition of the passage—"Him who knew no sin, God hath made *sin* for us," as the sin offerings of the law were made *sins* for offenders, the death of innocent creatures exempting from death those who were really criminal. (*Vide* CHAPMAN'S *Eusebius*, chap. iv.) This allusion to the Levitical sin offerings is also established by the connection of Christ's sin offering with our reconciliation. Such was the effect of the sin offerings among the Jews, and such, St. Paul tells us, is the effect of Christ being made a sin offering for us; a sufficient proof that he does not use the term figuratively, nor speak of the *indirect* but of the *direct* effect of the death of Christ in reconciling us to GOD.

Again, in Ephes. v, 2, "Christ loved us and gave himself for us, an *offering and sacrifice to God*, for a sweet-smelling savour." Here, also, he uses the very terms applied to the Jewish sacrifices. How, then, could a Jew, or even a Gentile, understand him? Would an inspired man use sacrificial language without a sacrificial sense, and merely amuse his readers with the sound of words without meaning, or employ them without notice being given, in a meaning which the readers were not accustomed to affix to them? The argument forbids this, as well as the reason and honesty of the case. His object was to impress the Ephesians with the deepest sense of the love of Christ; and he says, "Christ LOVED us; and *gave up himself for us*;" and then explains the mode in which he thus gave himself up *for* us, that is, in our room and stead, "an OFFERING and SACRIFICE to God, for a sweet-smelling savour;" by which his readers could only understand, that Christ gave himself up a sacrifice for them, as other sacrifices had been given up for them, "in the way of expiation, to obtain for them the mercy and favour of GOD." The cavil of Crellius and his followers on this passage is easily answered. He says, that the phrase "a sweet-smelling savour," is scarcely ever used of sin offerings or expiatory sacrifices; but of burnt offerings, and peace offerings, by which expiation was not made. But

here are two mistakes. The first lies in assuming that burnt offerings were not expiatory, whereas they are said "to make atonement," and were so considered by the Jews, though sometimes also they were eucharistic. The second mistake is, that the phrase, "a sweet-smelling savour," is by some peculiar fitness applied to one class of offerings alone. It is a gross conception, that it relates principally to the odour of sacrifices burned with fire; whereas it signifies the *acceptableness* of sacrifices to God; and is so explained in Phil. iv, 18, where the apostle calls the bounty of the Philippians, "an odour of *sweet smell*," and adds, exegetically, "a sacrifice *acceptable* and *well pleasing to* GOD." The phrase is, probably, taken from the incensing which accompanied the sacrificial services.

To these instances must be added the *whole argument* of St. Paul, in the Epistle to the Hebrews. To what purpose does he prove that Christ had a superior priesthood to Aaron, if Christ were only metaphorically a priest? What end is answered by proving that his offering of himself had greater efficacy than the oblations of the tabernacle, in taking away sin, if sin was not taken away in the same sense, that is, by expiation? Why does he lay so mighty a stress upon the death of our Lord, as being "a better sacrifice," if, according to the received sense, it was no sacrifice at all? His argument, it is manifest, would go for nothing, and be no better than an unworthy trifling with his readers, and especially with the Hebrews to whom he writes the epistle, beneath not only an inspired but an ordinary writer. Fully to unfold the argument, we might travel through the greater part of the epistle; but one or two passages may suffice. In chap. vii, 27, speaking of Christ as our high priest, he says, "Who needeth not daily as those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for his own sins, and then for the people's, for this (latter) he did *once* when he offered up himself." The circumstance of his offering sacrifice not *daily*, but "once for all," marks the superior value and efficacy of his sacrifice; his offering up this sacrifice "of himself" for the sins of the people, as the Jewish high priest offered his animal sacrifices for the sins of the people, marks the similarity of the act; in both cases atonement was made, but with different degrees of efficacy; but unless atonement for sin was in reality made by his thus offering up "himself," the virtue and efficacy of Christ's sacrifice would be inferior to that of the Aaronical priesthood, contrary to the declared design and argument of the epistle. Let us, also, refer to chap. ix, 13, 14, "For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh," so as to fit the offender for joining in the service of the tabernacle, "how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your consciences from dead works, to serve the living GOD." The comparison here lies in this, that the Levitical sacrifices

expiated legal punishments; but did not in themselves acquit the people absolutely in respect to God, as the Governor and Judge of mankind; but that the blood of Christ extends its virtue to the conscience, and eases it of all guilty terror of the wrath to come on account of "dead works," or works which deserve death under the universal, moral law. The ground of this comparison, however, lies in the real efficacy of each of these expiations. Each "purifies," each delivers from guilt, but the latter only as "pertaining to the conscience," and the mode in each case is by expiation. But to interpret the purging of the conscience, as the Socinians, of mere dissuasion from dead works to come, or as descriptive of the power of Christ to acquit men, upon their repentance, declaratively destroys all just similitude between the blood of Christ and that of the animal sacrifices, and the argument amounts to nothing.

We conclude with a passage, to which we have before adverted, which institutes a comparison between the Levitical purification of the holy places made with hands, and the purification of the heavenly places by the blood of Christ. "And almost all things are by the law purged with blood, and without shedding of blood is no remission. It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are figures of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us." To enter into the meaning of this passage, we are to consider that God dwelt personally among the Israelites; that the sanctuary and tabernacle are represented as polluted by their sins, and even corporal impurities, the penalty of which was death, unless atoned for, or expiated according to law, and that all unclean persons were debarred access to the tabernacle and the service of God, until expiation was made, and purification thereby effected. It was under these views that the sin offerings were made on the day of expiation, to which the apostle alludes in the above passage. Then the high priest entered into the holy of holies, with the blood of sacrifices, to make atonement both for himself and the whole people. He first offered for himself and for his house a bullock, and sprinkled the blood of it upon and before the mercy seat within the veil. Afterward he killed a goat for a sin offering for the people and sprinkled the blood in like manner. This was called *atoning* for, or *hallowing* and *reconciling* the holy place, and the tabernacle of the congregation, "because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and because of their transgressions in all their sins." The effect of all this was the remission of sins, which is represented by the scape goat, who carried away the sins which had been confessed over him, with imposition of hands; and the purification of the priests and people, so that their holy places were made acce-

sible to them, and they were allowed, without fear of the *death* which had been threatened, to "draw near" to God.

We have already shown that here the holy places made with hands, and the "true holy places," of which they were the figures, were purified and opened, each in the same way, by the sprinkling of the blood of the victims—the patterns or emblems of things in the heavens, by the blood of animals, the heavenly places themselves by "better sacrifices," and that the argument of the apostle forbids us to suppose that he is speaking figuratively. Let us, then, merely mark the correspondence of the type and antitype in this case, as exhibited by the apostle. He compares the legal sacrifices and that of Christ in the similar purification of the respective Αγια or sanctuaries to which each had relation. The Jewish sanctuary on earth was purified, that is, opened and made accessible by the one; the celestial sanctuary, the true and everlasting seat of God's presence, by the other. Accordingly, in other passages, he pursues the parallel still farther, representing Christ as procuring for men, by his death, a happy admission into heaven, as the sin offerings of the law obtained for the Jews a safe entrance into the tabernacle on earth. "Having, therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; and having a high priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water." Thus, also, he tells us that "we are sanctified by the offering of the body of Christ Jesus," and that as the bodies of those animals whose blood was carried into the holy of holies by the high priest, to make an atonement for sin, were burned "without the camp," so also Jesus suffered without the gate, "that he might sanctify the people with his own blood."

The notion that sacrificial terms are applied to the death of Christ by rhetorical figure is, then, sufficiently refuted by the foregoing considerations. But it has been argued, that as there is, in many respects, a want of literal conformity between the death of Christ and the sacrifices of the law, a considerable license of figurative interpretation must be allowed. Great confusion of ideas on this subject has resulted from not observing a very obvious distinction which exists between *figurative* and *analogical* language. It by no means follows, that when language cannot be interpreted literally it must be taken figuratively, or by way of rhetorical allusion. This distinction is well made by a late writer. (*Veysies' Bampton Lectures.*)

"Figurative language," he observes, "does not arise from the real nature of the thing to which it is transferred, but only from the imagination of him who transfers it. So, a man of courage is fi[illegible]vely called a lion, not because the real nature of a lion belongs to hi[illegible]se

one quality which characterizes this animal belongs to him in an eminent degree, and the imagination conceives of them as partakers of a common nature, and applies to them one common name. But there is a species of language, usually called analogical, which, though not strictly proper, is far from being merely figurative, the terms being transferred from one thing to another, not because the things are *similar*, but because they are in *similar relations*. The term thus transferred, is as truly significant of the real nature of the thing, in the relation in which it stands, as it could be, were it the primitive and proper word. Thus the term *foot* properly signifies the lower extremity of an animal, or that on which it stands; but, because the lower extremity or base of a mountain is to the mountain what the foot is to the animal, it is therefore called the same name, and the term thus applied is significant of something *real*, something which, if not a *foot* in strict propriety of speech, is, nevertheless truly so, considered with respect to the circumstance upon which the analogy is founded. But this mode of expression is more common with respect to our mental and intellectual faculties and operations, which we are wont to denominate by words borrowed from similar functions of the bodily organs and corresponding attributes of material things. Thus *to see*, is properly to acquire impressions of sensible objects by the organs of sight; but to the *mind* is also attributed an *eye*, with which we are analogically said to see objects *intellectual*. In like manner, great and little, equal and unequal, smooth and rough, sweet and sour, are properly attributes of material substances; but they are analogically ascribed to such as are immaterial; for without intending a figure, we speak of a *great mind*, and a *little mind*; and the natural *temper* of one man is said to be *equal*, *smooth*, and *sweet*, while that of another is called *unequal*, *rough*, and *sour*. And if we thus express such intellectual things as fall more immediately under our observation, we cannot wonder that things spiritual and Divine, which are more removed from our direct inspection, should be exhibited to our apprehension in the same manner. The conceptions which we thus form, may be imperfect and inadequate; but they are, nevertheless, just and true, consequently the language in which they are expressed, although borrowed, is not merely figurative, but is significant of something real in the things concerned."

To apply this to the case before us, the blood or life of Christ is called our *ransom* and the *price* of our redemption. Now, admitting that these expressions are not to be understood literally, does it follow that they contain mere figure and allusion? By no means. They contain *truth* and *reality*. Christ came to redeem us from the power of sin and Satan, by paying for our deliverance no less a price than his own blood. "In him we have redemption through his blood." "The Son of man came to give his life a ransom for many;" and we are

thought, by this representation, that the blood of Christ, in the deliverance of sinful man, corresponds to a price or ransom in the deliverance of a captive, and consequently is a price or ransom, if not literally, at least *really* and *truly*.

When Christ is called "our passover," the same analogical use of terms is manifest, and in several other passages which will be familiar to the reader; but we hesitate to apply the same rule of interpretation throughout, and to say with the author just quoted, and Archbishop Magee, who refers to him on this point with approbation, that Christ is called a "sin offering" and a "sacrifice" analogically. These terms, on the contrary, are used *properly*, and must be understood *literally*.—For what was an expiatory sacrifice under the law, but the offering of the life of an innocent creature in the place of the guilty, and that, in order to obtain his exemption from death? The death of Christ is as literally an offering of himself "the just for the unjust," to exempt the latter from death. The legal sin offerings cleansed the body and qualified for the ceremonial worship prescribed by the law; and the blood of Christ as truly purifies the conscience and consecrates to the spiritual service required by the Gospel. The *circumstances* differ, but the things themselves are not so much *analogical* as *identical* in their nature, though differing in circumstances, that is, so far as the legal sacrifices had any efficacy, *per se*; but, in another and a higher view, the sacrifice of Christ was the only true sacrifice, and the Levitical ones were but the appointed types of that. If, therefore, in this argument, we may refer to the Mosaic sacrifices, to fix the sense in which the New Testament uses the sacrificial terms in which it speaks of the death of Christ, against an objector; yet, in fact, the sacrifices of the law are to be interpreted by the sacrifice of Christ, and not the latter by them.—They are rather analogical with it, than it with them. There was a previous ordination of pardon through the appointed sacrifice of the Lamb of God, "slain from the foundation of the world," to which they all, in different degrees, referred, and of which they were but the visible and sensible monitors "for the time present."

As to the objection, that the Jewish sacrifices had no reference to the expiation of moral transgression, we observe,

1. That a distinction is to be made between sacrifice as a part of the theo-political law of the Jews, and sacrifice as a consuetudinary rite, practised by their fathers, and by them also previous to the giving of the law from Mount Sinai, and taken up into the Mosaic institute. This was continued partly on its original ground, and partly, and with additions, as a branch of the polity under which the Jews were placed. With this rite they were familiar before the law, and even before the exodus from Egypt. "Let us go," says Moses to Pharaoh, "we pray thee, three days' journey into the desert, and sacrifice to the Lord our

God, lest he fall upon us with pestilence or with the sword." Here sacrifice is spoken of, and that with reference to expiation, or the averting of the Divine displeasure. There is in this, too, an acknowledgment of offences, as the reason of sacrificing; but these offences could not be against the forms and ceremonies of an institute which did not then exist, and must, therefore, have been moral offences. We may add to this, that in the books of Leviticus and Exodus, Moses speaks of sacrifices as a previous practice, and, in some cases, so far from prescribing the *act*, does no more than regulate the mode. "If his offering be a burnt sacrifice of the herd, let him offer a male." Had their sacrifices, therefore, reference only to cases of ceremonial offence, then it would follow that they had been deprived of the worship of their ancestors, which respected the obtaining of the Divine favour in the forgiveness of moral offences, and that they obtained, as a substitute, a kind of worship which respected only ceremonial cleansings, and a ceremonial reconciliation. They had this, manifestly, as the type of something higher; and they had also the patriarchal rites with renewed sanctions and under new regulations; and thus there was a real advance in the spirituality of their worship, while it became, at the same time, more ceremonial and exact.

2. That the offerings which were formerly prescribed under the law had reference to moral transgressions, as well as to external aberrations from the purity and exactness of the Levitical ritual.

"Atonement" is said to be made "for sins committed against any of the commandments of the Lord." It appears also, that sins of "ignorance" included all sins which were not ranked in the class of "presumptuous sins," or those to which death was inevitably annexed by the civil law, and, therefore, must have included many cases of moral transgression. For some specific instances of this kind, sin offerings were enjoined, such as lying, theft, fraud, extortion, and perjury. (3)

3. That if all the sin offerings of the Levitical institute had respected legal atonement and ceremonial purification, nothing could have been collected from that circumstance to invalidate the true sacrifice of Christ. It is of the nature of a type to be inferior in efficacy to the antitype; and the Apostle Paul himself argues, from the invalidity of Levitical sacrifices to take away guilt from the conscience, the superior efficacy of the sacrifice of Christ. It follows, then, that as truly as they were legal atonements, so truly was Christ's death a moral atonement; as truly as they purified the flesh, so truly did his sacrifice purify the conscience.

(3) Vide Outram De Sac.; Hallet's Notes and Discourses; Hammond and Rosenmuller in Heb. ix; Richie's Pec. Doctrine.

CHAPTER XXII.

Redemption—Primitive Sacrifices.

To the rite of sacrifice before the law, practised in the patriarchal ages, up to the first family, it may be proper to give some consideration, both for the farther elucidation of some of the topics above stated, and for the purpose of exhibiting the harmony of those dispensations of religion which were made to fallen man in different ages of the world. That the ante-Mosaic sacrifices were *expiatory*, is the first point which it is necessary to establish. It is not, indeed, at all essential to the argument, to ascend higher than the sacrifices of the law, which we have already proved to be of that character, and by which the expiatory efficacy of the death of Christ is represented in the New Testament.—This, however, was also the character of the more ancient rites of the patriarchal Church; and thus we see the same principles of moral government, which distinguish the Christian and Mosaic dispensations, carried still higher as to antiquity, even to the family of the first man, the first transgressor; "without shedding of blood there was no remission."

The proofs that sacrifices of atonement made a part of the religious system of the patriarchs who lived before the law, are first the distribution of beasts into *clean* and *unclean*, which we find prior to the flood of Noah. This is a singular distinction, and one which could not then have reference to *food*, since animal food was not allowed to man prior to the deluge; and as we know of no other ground for the distinction, except that of sacrifice, it must, therefore, have had reference to the selection of victims to be solemnly offered to God, as a part of worship, and as the means of drawing near to him by expiatory rites for the forgiveness of sins. Some, it is true, have regarded this distinction of clean and unclean beasts as used by Moses by way of *prolepsis*, or anticipation, a notion which, if it could not be refuted by the context, would be perfectly arbitrary. But not only are the beasts, which Noah was to receive into the ark, spoken of as clean and unclean; but in the command to take them into the ark, a difference is made in the *number* to be preserved, the former being to be received by *sevens*, and the latter by *two* of a kind. This shows that this distinction among beasts had been established in the time of Noah, and thus the assumption of a prolepsis is refuted. In the law of Moses a similar distinction is made; but the only reasons given for it are two: in this manner, those victims which God would allow to be used for piacular purposes, were marked out; and by this distinction those animals were designated which were permitted for food. The former only can, therefore, be considered as

the ground of this distinction among the antediluvians; for the critical attempts which have been made to show that animals were allowed to man for food, previous to the flood, have wholly failed.

A second argument is furnished by the prohibition of blood for food, after animals had been granted to man for his sustenance along with the "herb of the field." This prohibition is repeated by Moses to the Israelites, with this explanation, "I have given it upon the altar, to make *an atonement* for your souls." From this "*additional* reason," as it has been called, it has been argued, that the doctrine of the atoning power of blood was new, and was then, for the first time, announced by Moses, or the same reason for the prohibition would have been given to Noah. To this we may reply, 1. That unless the same reason be supposed as the ground of the prohibition of blood to Noah, as that given by Moses to the Jews, no reason at all can be conceived for this restraint being put upon the appetite of mankind from Noah to Moses; and yet we have a prohibition of a most solemn kind, which in itself could have no reason enjoined, without any external reason being either given or conceivable. 2. That it is a mistake to suppose, that the declaration of Moses to the Jews, that God had "given them the blood for an atonement," is an *additional reason* for the interdict, not to be found in the original prohibition to Noah. The whole passage in Lev. xvii, is, "And thou shalt say to them, Whatsoever man there be of the house of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn among you, that eateth any manner of blood, I will even set my face against that soul, that eateth blood, and I will cut him off from among his people, FOR THE LIFE of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it upon the altar, to make atonement for your souls; *for it is the* BLOOD (or LIFE) that maketh atonement for the soul." The great reason, then, of the prohibition of blood is, that it is the LIFE; and what follows respecting atonement, is *exegetical* of this reason; the life is in the blood, and the blood or life is given as an atonement. Now, by turning to the original prohibition in Genesis, we find that precisely the same reason is given. "But the flesh with the blood, which is *the life* thereof, shall ye not eat." The reason, then, being the same, the question is, whether the exegesis added by Moses, must not necessarily be understood in the general reason given for the restraint to Noah. Blood is prohibited for this reason, that it is the *life;* and Moses adds, that it is "the blood," *or life* "which makes atonement." Let any one attempt to discover any reason for the prohibition of blood to Noah, in the mere circumstance that it is "the life," and he will find it impossible. It is no reason at all, moral or instituted, except that as it was life substituted for life, the life of the animal in sacrifice for the life of man, and that it had a sacred appropriation. The manner, too, in which Moses introduces the subject, is indicative that, though he was renewing a prohibition, he was not pub-

lishing a "new doctrine;" he does not teach his people that God had then given, or appointed, blood to make atonement; but he prohibits them from eating it, because he had made this appointment, without reference to time, and as a subject with which they were familiar. Because the blood was the life, it was sprinkled upon, and poured out at the altar: and we have in the sacrifice of the paschal lamb, and the sprinkling of its blood, a sufficient proof, that before the giving of the law, not only was blood not eaten, but was appropriated to a sacred, sacrificial purpose. Nor was this confined to the Jews; it was customary with the Romans and Greeks, who, in like manner, poured out and sprinkled the blood of victims at their altars, a rite derived, probably, from the Egyptians, as they derived it, not from Moses, but from the sons of Noah. The notion, indeed, that the blood of the victims was peculiarly sacred to the gods, is impressed upon all ancient pagan mythology.

Thirdly, the sacrifices of the patriarchs were those of animal victims, and their use was to avert the displeasure of God from sinning men. Thus in the case of Job, who, if it could be proved that he did not live before the law, was, at least, not under the law, and in whose country the true patriarchal theology was in force, the prescribed burnt offering was for the averting the "wrath" of God, which was kindled against Eliphaz and his two friends, "lest," it is added, "I deal with you after your folly." The doctrine of expiation could not, therefore, be more explicitly declared. The burnt offerings of Noah, also, after he left the ark, served to avert the "cursing of the ground any more for man's sake," that is, for man's sin, and the "smiting any more every thing living." In like manner, the end of Abel's offering was pardon and acceptance with God, and by it these were attained, for "he obtained witness that he was *righteous*." But as this is the first sacrifice which we have on record, and has given rise to some controversy, it may be considered more largely: at present, however, the only question is its *expiatory* character.

As to the matter of the sacrifice, it was an *animal* offering. "Cain brought of the fruit of the ground, and Abel he also brought of the *firstlings of his flock*, and of the fat thereof;" or, more literally, "the fat of them," that is, according to the Hebrew idiom, the fattest or best of his flock. Le Clerc and Grotius would understand Abel to have offered the wool and milk of his flock, which interpretation, if no critical difficulty opposed it, would be rendered violently improbable by the circumstance that neither wool nor milk is ever mentioned in Scripture as fit oblations to God. But to translate the word rendered *firstlings*, by best and finest, and then to suppose an ellipsis, and supply it with wool, is wholly arbitrary, and contradicted by the import of the word itself. But, as Dr. Kennicott remarks, the matter is set at rest by the context;

"for, if it be allowed by all, that Cain's bringing OF the fruit of the ground, means his bringing the fruit (itself) of the ground, then Abel's bringing OF the firstlings of his flock must, likewise, mean his bringing the firstlings of his flock" (themselves.) (*Two Dissertations. See also Magee's Discourses.*)

This is farther supported by the import of the phrase πλειονα θυσιαν, used by the apostle in the Epistle to the Hebrews, when speaking of the sacrifice of Abel. Our translators have rendered it "a more excellent sacrifice." Wickliffe translates it, as Archbishop Magee observes, uncouthly, but in the full sense of the original, "a much more sacrifice;" and the controversy which has been had on this point is, whether this epithet of "much more," or "fuller," refers to quantity or quality; whether it is to be understood in the sense of a *more abundant*, or of a *better*, a *more excellent* sacrifice. Dr. Kennicott takes it in the sense of measure and quantity, as well as quality, and supposes that Abel brought a double offering of the firstlings of his flock, and of the fruit of the ground *also*. His criticism has been very satisfactorily refuted by Archbishop Magee; (*Discourses on Atonement;*) and Mr. Davison, who has written an acute work in reply to those parts of that learned prelate's work on the atonement, which relate to the Divine origin of the primitive sacrifices, has attempted no answer to this criticism, and only observes that "the *more abundant sacrifice* is the more probable signification of the passage, because it is the more natural force of the term πλειονα when applied to a subject, as θυσιαν, capable of measure and quantity." This is but assumption; and we read the term in other passages of Scripture, (as in Matt. vi, 25, "Is not the life *more* than meat, and the body than raiment?") where the idea of quantity is necessarily excluded, and that of superiority and excellence of quality, is as necessarily intended. But why is this stress laid on quantity? Are we to admit the strange principle that an offering is acceptable to God, because of its quantity alone, and that the quantity of sacrifice, when even no measure has been prescribed by any law of GOD, has an absolute connection with the state of the heart of an offerer? Frequency or non-frequency of offering might have some claim to be considered as this indication; but, certainly, the quantity of gifts, where, according to the opinion of those generally who adopt this view, sacrifices had not yet been subjected to express regulation, would be a very imperfect indication. If the quantity of a sacrifice could at all indicate, under such circumstances, any moral quality, that quality would be gratitude; but then we must suppose Abel's offering to have been *eucharistic*. Here, however, the sacrifice of Abel was that of animal victims, and it was indicative of *faith*, a quality not to be made manifest by the *quantity* of an offering made, for the one has no relation to the other; and the sacrifice itself was, as we shall see, of a strictly expiatory character.

This will more fully appear, if we look at the import of the words of the apostle in some views, which have not always been brought fully out in what has been more recently written on the subject. "By FAITH Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained WITNESS, that he was RIGHTEOUS, GOD testifying of his gifts; and by it, he being dead yet speaketh."

What is the meaning of the apostle, when he says that it was witnessed or testified to Abel that he was *righteous?* His doctrine is, that men are sinners; that all, consequently, need pardon; and to be declared, witnessed, or accounted righteous, are, according to his style of writing, the same as to be justified, pardoned, and dealt with as righteous. Thus, he argues that "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness"—"that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness"—"that he received the sign of circumcision, a *seal*," a visible, confirmatory, declaratory, and witnessing mark "of the righteousness which he had by faith." In these cases we have a similarity so striking, that they can scarcely fail to explain each other. In both, sinful men are placed in the condition of *righteous* men—the instrument, in both cases, is *faith;* and the transaction is, in both cases also, publicly and sensibly *witnessed;* as to Abraham, by the sign of circumcision; as to Abel, by a visible acceptance of his sacrifice, and the rejection of that of Cain.

But it is said, "St. Paul affirms that Abel, by the acceptance of his sacrifice, gained the testimony of GOD, that he was a *righteous* man. He affirms, therefore, that it was his personal habit of righteousness to which God vouchsafed the testimony of his approbation, by that acceptance of his offering. The antecedent faith in GOD, which produced that habit of a religious life, commended his sacrifice, and the Divine testimony was not to the *specific form* of his oblations; but to his *actual righteousness.*" (*Davison's Inquiry into the Origin and Intent of Primitive Sacrifice.*)

The objections to this view of the matter are many.

1. It leaves out entirely all consideration of the difference between the sacrifice of Abel and that of Cain, and places the reason of the acceptance of one and the rejection of the other wholly in the moral character of the offerers; whereas St. Paul most unequivocally places the acceptance of Abel's offering upon its nature and the principle of faith which originated it. For, whether we translate the phrase above referred to, "a more excellent sacrifice," or "a more *abundant* sacrifice," it is put in contrast with the offering of Cain, and its peculiar nature cannot be left out of the account. By Mr. Davison's interpretation, the designation given to Abel's offering by the apostle is entirely overlooked.

2. The "faith" of Abel, in this transaction, is also passed over as a

consideration in the acceptance of his sacrifice. It is, indeed, brought in as "an *antecedent* faith, which produced the habit of a religious life," and thus *mediately* "commended the sacrifice;" but, in fact, on this ground any other influential grace or principle might be said to have commended his sacrifice, as well as faith; any thing which tended to produce "the habit of a religious life," his fear of God, his love of God, as effectually as his faith in God. There is, then, this manifest difference between this representation of the case and that which is given by St. Paul, that the one makes "the habit of a religious life," the *immediate*, and faith but the *remote* reason of the acceptableness of Abel's gifts; while the other assigns a direct efficacy to the faith of Abel, and the kind of sacrifice by which that faith was expressed, and of which it was the immediate result.

3. In this chapter the apostle is not speaking of faith under the view of its tendency to induce a holy life; but of faith as producing certain acts of very various kinds, which being followed by manifest tokens of the Divine favour, showed how acceptable faith is to God, or how it "pleases him," according to his own position laid down in the commencement of the chapter—"Without faith it is impossible to please God." Abel had faith, and he expressed that faith by the kind of sacrifice he offered; it was in this way that his faith "pleased God;" it pleased him as a principle, and by the act to which it led, and that act was the offering of a sacrifice to God different from that of Cain. Cain had not this faith, whatever might be its object; and Cain accordingly did not bring an offering to which God had "respect." That which vitiated the offering of Cain was the want of this faith, for his offering was not significant of faith; that which "pleased God," in the case of Abel, was his faith, and he had "respect" to his offering, because it was the expression of that faith, and upon his faith so expressing itself, God witnessed to him "that he was righteous."

So, certainly, do the words of St. Paul, when commenting upon this transaction, establish it against the author above quoted, that Abel's sacrifice was accepted, because of its immediate connection with his *faith*, for, by faith he is said to have offered it; and all that, whatever it might be, which made Abel's offering differ from that of Cain, whether *abundance*, or *kind*, or both, was the result of this faith. So clearly, also, is it laid down by the apostle that Abel was witnessed to be "righteous," not with reference to any previous "habit of a religious life," but with reference to his *faith;* and not to his faith as leading to personal righteousness, but to his faith as expressing itself by his offering "a more excellent sacrifice."

Mr. Davison, in support of his opinion, adopts the argument of many before him, that "the rest of Scripture speaks to Abel's *personal righteousness*. Thus, in St. John's distinction between Cain and Abel,

'wherefore slew he him? because his own *works* were evil, and his brother's righteous.' Thus in the remonstrance of God with Cain, that remonstrance with Cain's envy for the acceptance of Abel's offering is directed, not to the mode of their sacrifice, but to the good and evil doings of their respective lives—'If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted, and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door.'" (*Inquiry, &c.*)

With respect to the words in St. John, they may be allowed to refer to Abel's "personal righteousness," without affecting the statement of St. Paul in the least. It would be a bad rule of criticism *fully* to explain the comments of one sacred writer upon a transaction, the principle and nature of which he explains professedly, by the remark of another, when the subject is introduced only allusively and incidentally. St. John's words must not here be brought in to qualify St. Paul's exposition; but St. Paul's exposition to complete the incidental allusion of St. John. Both apostles agreed that no man was righteous personally, till he was made righteous by forgiveness; accounted and witnessed righteous by faith; and both agree that from that follows a personal righteousness. If St. John, then, refers to Abel's personal righteousness, he refers to it as flowing from his justification and acceptance with God, and by that personal righteousness the "wrath" of Cain, which was first excited by the rejection of his sacrifice, was, probably ripened into the "hatred" which led on his fratricide; for it does not appear that he committed that act immediately upon the place of sacrifice, but at some subsequent period; and, certainly, it was not the antecedent holy life of Abel which first produced Cain's displeasure against his brother, for this is expressly attributed to the transactions of the day in which each brought his offering to the Lord. St. John's reference to Abel's personal righteousness does not, therefore, exclude a reference also, and even primarily to his faith as its instrumental cause, and the source of its support and nourishment; and, we may add, that it is St. John's rule, and must be the rule of every New Testament writer, to regard a man's submission to, or rejection of, God's method of saving men by faith, as the best evidence of personal righteousness, or the contrary. As to Genesis iv, 7, "If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted; and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door," in order to show that it cannot be proved from this passage, that Abel's offering was accepted because of his personal righteousness, it is not necessary to avail ourselves of Lightfoot's view of it, who takes "*sin*" to be the ellipsis of *sin offering*, as in many places of Scripture. For and against this rendering much ingenious criticism has been employed, for which the critics must be consulted. (4) The interpretation which supposes Cain to be

(4) Nearly all that can be said on this interpretation will be found in Magee's Discourses on the Atonement, and Davison's Reply to his criticism, in his Inquiry into the Origin of Primitive Sacrifice.

[illegible] to a sin offering, an animal victim "lying at the door," is, at [illegible] doubtful; but if this be conceded, the argument framed upon the [illegible] to Cain, "if thou doest WELL, shalt not thou be accepted," as though the reason of the acceptance of Abel's sacrifice was in "well doing" in the *moral* sense only, is wholly groundless, since the apostle so explicitly refers the reason of the acceptance of his sacrifice to his faith, as before established. It is enough to show that there is nothing in these words to contradict this, even if we take them in the most obvious sense, and omit the consideration that the Hebrew text has, in this place, been disturbed, of which there are strong indications. The passage may be taken in two views. Either to "*do well*," may mean to do as Abel had done, viz. to repent and bring those sacrifices which should express his faith in God's appointed method of pardoning and accepting men, thus submitting himself wholly to GOD; and then it is a merciful intimation that Cain's rejection was not final; but that it depended upon himself whether he would seek God in sincerity and truth. Or the words may be considered as a declaration of the principles of God's righteous government over men. "If thou doest well," if thou art righteous and unsinning, thou shalt be accepted as such, without sacrifice; "but if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door," and is chargeable upon thee with its consequence; thus, after declaring his moral condition, leaving it to himself to seek for pardon in the method established in the first family, and which Cain must be supposed to have known as well as Abel, or, otherwise, we must suppose that they had received no religious instruction at all from Adam their father. To the former view of the sense of the passage it cannot be objected that to offer proper sacrifices from a right principle cannot be called, in the common and large sense "*to do well*," for even "to believe" is called "a work" by our Saviour; and the sacrifice of Abel was, moreover, as we see, a series of *acts*, which were the expressions of his faith, and, therefore, might be called a *doing well*, without any violence. Agreeably to this, the whole course of the submission of the Jews to the laws concerning their sacrifices, is often, in Scripture, designated by the terms *ordinances* and *ways*, and *doings*. The second interpretation corresponds to the great axiom of moral government alluded to by St. Paul, "Do this and thou shalt live," which is so far from excluding the doctrine of justification by faith, that it is the ground on which he argues it, inasmuch as it shuts out the justification of men by law when it has once been violated.

Is, then, it has been established that the faith of Abel had an immediate connection with his sacrifice; and both with his being accepted as righteous, that is, *justified*, in St. Paul's use of the term, to what had his faith respect? The particular object of the faith of the elders, celebrated in Hebrews xi, is to be deduced from the circumstances adduced as

illustrative of the existence and operation of this great principle, and by which it manifested itself. Let us illustrate this, and then ascertain the objects of Abel's faith also from the manner of its manifestation, from the *acts* in which it embodied and rendered itself conspicuous.

Faith is, in this chapter, taken in the sense of *affiance* in God, and, as such, it can only be exercised toward God as to all particular acts, in those respects, in which we have some *authority* to confide in him. This supposes revelation, and, in particular, some promise or declaration on his part, as the warrant for every act of affiance. When, therefore, it is said that "by faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death," it must be supposed that he had some promise or intimation to this effect, on which, improbable as the event was, he nobly relied, and in the result God honoured his faith before all men. The faith of Noah had immediate respect to the threatened flood, and the promise of God to preserve him in the ark which he was commanded to prepare. The faith of Abraham had different objects. In one of the instances which this chapter records, it respected the promise of the land of Canaan to his posterity, and also the promise of the heavenly inheritance, of which that was the type; which faith he publicly manifested by "sojourning in the land of promise, as in a strange country," and "dwelling in tabernacles," rather than taking up a permanent residence in any of its cities, because "he looked for a city which hath foundations." In the case of the offering of Isaac, he believed that God would raise his immolated son from the dead, and the ground of his faith is stated, in verse 18, to be the promise, "in Isaac shall thy seed be called." The faith of Sarah respected the promise of issue,—"she judged him faithful who had *promised*." "By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come," which faith had for its object the revelation made to him by God as to the future lot of the posterity of his two sons. The chapter is filled with other instances expressed or implied; and from the whole, as well as from the nature of the thing, it will appear that when the apostle speaks of the faith of the elders in its particular acts, he represents it as having respect to some promise, declaration, or revelation of God.

This revelation was necessarily antecedent to the faith; but it is also to be observed, that the acts by which the faith was represented, whenever it was represented by particular acts, and when the case admitted it, had a natural and striking conformity and correspondence to the previous revelation. So Noah built the ark, which indicated that he had heard the threat of the world's destruction by water, and had received the promise of his own and family's preservation, as well as that of a selection of the beasts of the earth; to all which the means of preservation, by which his faith was represented, and which it led him to

adopt, corresponded. When Abraham went into Canaan, at the command of God, and upon the promise that that country should become the inheritance of his descendants, he showed his faith by taking possession of it for them in anticipation, and his residence there indicated the kind of promise which he had received. When he lived in that promised land in tents, though opulent enough to have established himself in a more settled state, the very manner in which his faith expressed itself, showed that he had received the promise of a "better country," which made him willing to be a "stranger and wanderer on earth;" for "they that say such things," says the apostle, namely, that they are strangers and pilgrims, "confessing" it by these significant acts, "declare plainly that they seek a country," "that is, a heavenly." Thus, also, when Moses's faith expressed itself, in his refusing to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, this also clearly indicated that he had received the promise of something higher and more excellent than "the riches of Egypt," which he renounced, even "the recompense of the reward," to which, we are told, "he had respect." When his faith manifested itself by his forsaking Egypt at the head of his people, "not fearing the wrath of the king," this indicated that he had received a promise of protection and success, and he, therefore, "endured as seeing Him who is invisible,"

If, then, all these instances show, that when the faith which the apostle commends exhibits itself in some particular act, that act has a correspondency to the previous promise of revelation, which faith must have for its ground and reason, then are we constrained to interpret the acts of Abel's faith, so as to make them also correspond with some antecedent revelation, or rather, we must suppose that the antecedent revelation, though not expressly stated, (which is also the case in several other of the instances which are given in the chapter,) must have corresponded with them. His faith had respect to some previous revelation, and the nature of the revelation is to be collected from the significant manner in which he declared his faith in it.

Now that which Abel did, "by faith," was, if considered *generally*, to perform an act of solemn worship, in the confidence that it would be acceptable to God. This supposes a revelation, immediate or by tradition, that such acts of worship were acceptable to God, or his faith could have had no warrant, and would not have been faith, but fancy. But the case must be considered more particularly. His faith led him to offer "a more excellent sacrifice" than that of Cain; but this as necessarily implies, that there was some antecedent revelation, to which his faith, as thus expressed, had respect, and on which that peculiarity of his offering, which distinguished it from the offering of Cain, was founded; a revelation which indicated, that the way in which God would be approached acceptably, in solemn worship, was by animal sacrifices.

Without this, too, the faith to which his offering, which was an offering of the firstlings of his flock, had a special fitness and adaptation, could have had no warrant in Divine authority. But this revelation must have included, in order to its being the ground of faith, as "the substance of things hoped for," a promise of a benefit to be conferred, in which promise Abel might *confide*. But if so, then this promise must have been connected, not with the worship of God in general, or performed in any way whatever indifferently, but with his worship by animal oblations; for it was in this way that the faith of Abel indicated itself, specially and distinctively. The antecedent revelation was, therefore, a promise of a benefit to be conferred, by means of animal sacrifice; and we are taught what this benefit was, by that which was actually received by the offerer—"he obtained witness that he was *righteous*;" which, if the notion of his antecedent righteousness has been refuted, must be interpreted in the sense of a declaration of his personal justification, and acceptance as righteous, upon forgiveness of his sins. The reason of Abel's acceptance and of Cain's rejection is hereby made manifest; the one, in seeking the Divine favour, conformed to his established and appointed method of being approached by guilty men, and the other not only neglected this, but profanely and presumptuously substituted his own inventions.

It is impossible, then, to allow the act of Abel, in this instance, to have been an *act of faith*, without allowing that it had respect to a previous and *appropriate* revelation; a revelation which agreed to all the parts of that sacrificial action, by which he expressed his faith in it. Had Abel's sacrifice been *eucharistic* merely, it would have expressed gratitude, but not *faith*; or if faith in the general sense of confidence in God that he would receive an act of grateful worship, and reward the worshipper, it did not more express faith than the offering of Cain, who surely believed these two points, or he would not have brought an offering of any kind. The offering of Abel expressed a faith which Cain had not, and the doctrinal principles which Abel's faith respected, were such as his sacrifice visibly embodied. If it was not, then, an eucharistic sacrifice, it was an expiatory one; and, in fact, it is only in a sacrifice of this kind, that it is possible to see that faith exhibited, which Abel had, and Cain had not. By subsequent sacrifices of expiation, then, is this early expiatory offering to be explained, and from these it will be obvious to what doctrines and principles of an antecedent revelation the faith of Abel had respect, and which his sacrifice, the exhibition of his faith, proclaimed. Confession of the fact of being a sinner—acknowledgment of the demerit and penalty of sin and death—submission to an appointed mode of expiation; animal sacrifice offered *vicariously*, but, in itself, a mere type of a better sacrifice, "the seed of the woman," appointed to be offered at some future period—the efficacy of

this appointed method of expiation to obtain forgiveness and to admit the guilty into the Divine favour.

For these reasons, we think that the conclusion of many of our ancient divines, so admirably embodied in the following words of Archbishop Magee, is not too strong, but is fully supported by the argument of the case, as founded upon the brief but very explicit declarations of the history of the transaction in Genesis, and by the comment upon it in the Epistle to the Hebrews.

"Abel, in firm reliance on the promise of God, and in obedience to his command, offered that sacrifice, which had been enjoined as the religious expression of his faith; while Cain, disregarding the gracious assurances that had been vouchsafed, or at least disdaining to adopt the prescribed mode of manifesting his belief, possibly as not appearing to *his reason* to possess any efficacy or natural fitness, thought he had sufficiently acquitted himself of his duty in acknowledging the general superintendence of God, and expressing his gratitude to the Supreme Benefactor, by presenting some of those good things, which he thereby confessed to have been derived from his bounty. In short, Cain, the first born of the fall, exhibits the first fruits of his parents' disobedience, in the arrogance and self sufficiency of reason rejecting the aids of revelation, because they fell not within its apprehension of right. He takes the first place in the annals of Deism, and displays, in his proud rejection of the ordinance of sacrifice, the same spirit, which, in later days, has actuated his *enlightened* followers, in rejecting the sacrifice of Christ."

If it should be asked, what evidence we have from Scripture, that such an antecedent revelation as that to which we have said Abel's faith must have had respect, was made, the reply is, that if this rested only upon the necessary inferences which, in all fairness and consistency of interpretation, we must draw from the circumstances of the transaction, when combined with the apostle's interpretation of it, the ground would be strong enough to enable us to defend it against both the attacks of Socinians, and of those orthodox divines who, like Mr. Davison, would wrest it from us, as an unnecessary post to be taken in the combat with the impugners of the Christian doctrine of atonement, or one which is rather injurious than otherwise to the efficiency of the more direct argument. "Such expositions," says Mr. Davison, "do evil and disservice to truth; they bring in a wrong principle; they enforce a comment without a text. Such a principle is, undoubtedly, wrong, and has been the source of much religious speculation." This we grant, and feel how important the caution is. But it does not here apply. It is not enough to say that "the text" is not in the "Mosaic history;" we must prove that it is not in the New Testament, or necessarily implied in its comments upon and inferences from Old Testament facts and rela-

tions. The "text" itself, supposed to be wanting, may be there, and even "the comment" of an inspired writer often supplies the text, and his reasoning the premises wanting, in so many words, in the brief and veiled narrative of Moses. An uninspired comment, we grant, has not this prerogative; but an inspired one has, which is an important consideration, not to be overlooked. When we say that the MANNA, which fell in the wilderness, represented the supply of the spiritual Israel with the true bread which comes down from heaven, Mr. Davison might reply this is "the comment;" but where is "the text?" We acknowledge that the text upon which this comment is hung, is not in the history of Moses; but the authority of this comment, and, if we may so speak, an implied "text" itself, is to be found in the words of our Lord, who calls himself "that bread;" and in the words of St. Paul, who terms the manna the "spiritual" or typical bread. If we allege that the "ROCK," which when smitten poured forth its stream to refresh the fainting Israelites, was a figure of Christ, it might, in like manner, be urged that "the text" is wanting, and, certainly, we should not gather that view from the history of Moses; yet "the comment" is not ours, but that of the apostle, who says "that Rock was Christ," which can only be understood as asserting that it was an instituted and appointed type of Christ. Where we have no intimations of such adumbrations in the persons and transactions of the Old Testament, we are not at liberty to invent them, nor can we justly carry them beyond what is expressed by our inspired authority, or naturally and fairly inferred to be from it. On the other hand we are bound not to interpret the Old Testament without reference to the New; and not to disregard that light which the perfect revelation affords not only by its direct effulgence, but by its reflections upon the history of our redemption, up to the earliest ages.

If it be argued, from the silence of the Mosaic history, that such types and allusions were not understood as such by the persons among whom they were first instituted, the answer is, 1. That though they should not be supposed capable of understanding them as clearly as we do, yet it must be supposed, that the spiritual among them had their knowledge and faith greatly assisted by them, and that they were among those "wondrous things of the law," which were, in some measure, revealed to those who prayed with David, that their eyes might be opened "to behold them," or otherwise they were totally without religious use during all the ages previous to Christianity, and we must come to the conclusion that the whole system of types was without edification to the Jews, and are instructive only to us. If we conclude thus as to types, we may come to the same conclusion as to the prophecies of Messiah, to the spiritual meaning and real application of many of which there appears to be as little indication of a key as to the types. But this can-

not be affirmed, for St. Peter tells us, that of this "salvation the prophets searched diligently who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you; searching what or what manner of time the spirit which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow." The prophecies could, probably, be but dimly interpreted; but something was known of their general meaning, something important was obtained by "searching" to reward the search into their import. The same discovery of the general import and bearing of the types, must also have rewarded a search equally eager and pious. If this is not allowed, then they were not types to the ancient Church, a position which is contradicted by St. Paul, who declares, as to one instance, which may serve for the rest, namely, the entering of "the priest alone once every year into the inner tabernacle," that by this "the Holy Ghost SIGNIFIED that the way to the holiest was not YET made manifest," and that the tabernacle itself, including of course, its services, "was a *figure* FOR THE TIME THEN PRESENT, *in* or *during which* gifts and sacrifices were offered."

But, 2. We have, in one of the instances before adverted to in Hebrews xi, a direct proof of a distinct revelation, which is nowhere recorded in the Mosaic history separate from the temporal promise in which it appears to have been involved. By faith Abraham, having received the promise of Canaan as "a place which he should afterward receive for an inheritance," went to sojourn there; but by faith also he sojourned in this land of promise as a stranger, dwelling in tents, "for he looked for a city which had foundations," for the "heavenly state," and by that act he, and Isaac, and Jacob, "the heirs with him of the same PROMISE," declared plainly that they "desired a better country, even a heavenly." Of this better country they then received a PROMISE, which promise is not distinctly recorded in the history of Moses; and it must, therefore have been either included in the promise of Canaan, which was made to them and their descendants, as a type, an *understood* type, of the eternal and heavenly rest, which is agreeable to the allusions of St. Paul in other parts of the epistle; or else it was matter of separate and unrecorded revelation. In either view the history of Moses is silent, and yet we are compelled, by the comment of the apostle, and in opposition to the argument which Mr. Davison and others found upon that silence, to allow either a collateral revelation, separate from the promise of Canaan, or that that promise itself had a mystic sense which became the object of their faith; and thus the inspired comment of the apostle supplies a text wanting in the history, or an enlarged interpretation of that which is found in it.

With this case of Abraham, Mr. Davison is evidently perplexed, and feels how forcibly it bears against his own rules of interpreting the Mosaic history of the religion of those early ages. He justly contends.

otius and Le Clerc, that the object of the faith recorded in i, was not always a temporal one. But, then, he proposes how God, without having granted to those patriarchs the *ela-lation of an eternal heavenly state*, a revelation which is not ibited in the Pentateuch, trained them to the aim and implicit of that eternal state by *large* and *indefinite* promises of being ' and 'their great reward,' promises to which the present life, , furnished no adequate completion." Thus, then, we are to hat the heavenly state to which these patriarchs looked, was f entire inference from the promise that God would be "their heir reward," and from the consideration that nothing had o them, in this present life, to be adequate to these promises. ter we may reply that, if this were the only ground of their could not have made the inference till the close of life; for they know that something adequate to these promises, if not explained to refer chiefly to the future state, might not yet, r much delay, occur to them? But they had this faith from iving of the promises, and, therefore, it was not left to future rom circumstances. With respect to the former, that they at there was a heavenly state, from the promise to Abraham, thy God," when no previous "explicit revelation" of a future made; it not only supposes that the patriarchs had no revela- of a future life, no knowledge of the soul's immortality, or of judgment, of which, indeed, "Enoch prophesied;" but it is t with the public and expressive *action*, (an action, probably, o be instructive as a symbolical one to all with whom Abra- onnected in Canaan,) that he "dwelt in tents," in order "to *ly* that he sought a better country." This, surely, was not o be founded upon a probable, but still uncertain, inference inexplained general promise, "I will be thy God;" but one suited only to express a firm faith in an explicit revelation icular promise.

whole of this theory is swept away entirely by the declara- apostle, "These all died in faith, not having received THE ' that is, the things promised; "but having seen them afar off, persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that strangers and pilgrims on the earth;" strangers, not at home, ourneying to it. Now this home, this better country which it, the apostle here expressly says was not to them matter of but the subject of "PROMISES," in the faith of which they both lied.

ase of Abel's offering, as in those just given, the inspired com- e apostle supplies "the text" to the history; or, in other o illustrates and enlarges our knowledge of the transaction,

in its principles and antecedent circumstances, that we are bound to understand it not as persons who have not this additional information, or those who choose to disregard it, but as it is explained upon authority not to be questioned. Abel, says the apostle, offered his more excellent sacrifice "by *faith*," and faith must have respect to a preceding revelation.

We have just seen what doctrinal principles were implied in the practice of expiatory sacrifices, and if Abel's sacrifice was of this kind, which is the only satisfactory account which can be given of it, we have no reason to suppose that it included any thing less or lower than those appointed under the law, and which are expressly stated to be types and figures, and shadows of the evangelical expiation of sin. An antecedent revelation to this effect must be supposed as the ground of his faith; but we are not left wholly to this: we have an account, though brief, of such a revelation.

That the account is brief is no objection. What is written is not, for that reason, to be disregarded. There were, doubtless, reasons sufficiently wise why the history of the patriarchal ages was not more largely given. If it were only to exercise our diligence, and to lead us to resort to what has been called "the analogy of faith," and to interpret Scripture by Scripture, the reason would be important. In arguing from this brevity or silence, however, both against the Divine institution of primitive sacrifice, and the evangelical interpretation of the sacrifice of Abel, some writers are apt to overlook the fact, that the book of Genesis is but a sketch of this period of ancient history; that it is so throughout, and that it nowhere professes to be more. Arguments of this kind, as that of Bishop Warburton, who thinks it strange that if sacrifice were of Divine institution, not more is said on so important a subject, seem, insensibly, to proceed upon the supposition that the book of Genesis was the ritual and directory of the patriarchal Church, as that of Leviticus was the ritual of the Jewish. The absence of any account of the institution and prescribed mode of sacrifice might, in that case, have been thought strange; but it is a brief history, evidently intended only to be introductory to that of God's chosen people, the Jews, whose proper historiographer Moses, by Divine suggestion, became. Moses grounds no argument upon any part of it in favour of his own institutions, except it may be an implied one in favour of the peculiar relation of the Jews to God, as the seed of Abraham, to whom the land of Canaan was promised, and with whom a special covenant was made. The history of Abraham he was, therefore, bound to relate more at length, and he has done so; but where no immediate application of former events was to be made in this way, and the object was merely that of brief general instruction, we can see no particular rules binding upon him to omit or to insert any thing, to dilate, or to contract his nar-

rative. If we are to argue from the brevity or the omissions of the narrative of the book of Genesis, we may often fall into great absurdities, as many have done; and it might, indeed, be almost as fairly argued from the silence of this rapid history of the antediluvian world, that no code of morals was Divinely enjoined before the giving of the ten commandments, as that sacrifices were not Divinely instituted before the mandates issued from Sinai; for the silence of the book of Genesis equally respects both. We rather choose to argue, that as moral obedience must respect a law, and authoritative law must be a revelation from God; so as faith respects doctrine and promise, that doctrine and those promises, if faith be obligatory, must also be a revelation from God; and again, as we collect from God's displeasure against, or favour to certain kinds and courses of moral conduct, that man was under a law which respected morals; so also, from his acceptance of one kind of sacrifice, and his rejection of another, in the case of Cain and Abel, it will, for the same reason follow, that man was under a law of sacrifice, and more especially since the sacrifices to which God, in after ages, had uniform and special respect, were of the same kind as that of Abel,—animal, vicarious, and expiatory. In morals, we must suppose either traditional or personal revelation, or else give to them a human origin or invention, and in worship we have only the same alternative; but to give to primitive morality one origin, and to primitive worship another; to ascribe one to God and another to man, is to form a very incongruous system, and to involve ourselves in great difficulties. We must suppose Adam to have been an inspired teacher of morals, but to have left worship indifferent; or, if we exclude traditional revelation, and assume that every man was taught personally by God in those times, that God made revelations of his *law*, but none of his *grace;* that he revealed the standard by which every man might discover his sin and danger, but that he made no discovery of the means by which a man, painfully sensible of his guilt and liableness to the punishment, might approach him so as to obtain his forgiveness and blessing.

But beside this, it is easy to collect, from the sacred record in the early part of Genesis, brief as it is, no unimportant information of the theology which existed in the first family even prior to the sacrifice of Abel. That man was under law is certain; that death was the penalty of sin is equally certain. That the first pair sinned, and that they did not die, notwithstanding the law, were obvious facts. That the terms of their probation were changed, and that they were not shut out for ever from the Divine regard were circumstances equally clear; and also that they had means of approach to God, means of obtaining his favour, means of sanctification, means of obtaining eternal life, must also be necessarily inferred. Claims of justice and yearnings of mercy in God were seen at natural and legal variance and opposition; and if these

were harmonized, and harmonized they were, or "the Lamb" could not be said to have been slain "from the foundation of the world," then must we suppose that there was some indication of this "wisdom of God" revealed for a practical end, the necessity of which must always have existed, to prevent despair on the one hand, and a presumptuous disregard of the Divine laws on the other. Though in figurative language, or symbolical action, the manifestation of this truth might be made, yet it must have been substantially made, or it could not have been practical and influential. A veiled truth, is yet a truth, though veiled. A shadow indicates the outline of the substance, though a shadow; and the sun, though shrouded with clouds, fills the hemisphere with light, though not with brightness, for day, however clouded, is far different from night. We cannot conceive of a theology at all suited, in any practical degree, to man's fallen state, unless it comprehend the particulars we have given, as well as the knowledge of the existence and perfections of God; and if we find an express indication of the evangelical method of saving man by the interposition of the incarnate Son of God, we may be sure that, at least all that this indication, when fairly interpreted, contains was known to Abel before he offered his sacrifice; and, both from the brevity of the narrative and the office of Adam as the teacher of religion to his children, we might also infer that this indication was matter of converse and explanation, though this latter consideration we shall not insist upon.

It is in the first promise that this indication is to be found, and here we shall join issue with Mr. Davison as to its import, and the extent in which its meaning must have been understood in the first family.

In another part of this work it has been established, that this prophetic promise must be understood symbolically, and that it contained the first manifestation of Messiah. This, indeed, Mr. Davison acknowledges, but denies that his Divine nature, incarnation, the vicarious nature of his sufferings, and their atoning efficacy, could be inferred from it. As his remarks contain all that can be said against the commonly received opinion that it contained an *intimation* of all these, we may quote them. They contain some truth and much error. "One object of faith has been always the same; that object the Redeemer. The original promise in paradise created this prospect of faith to be the light and hope of the world for ever. But that original promise could not be interpreted by itself into the several parts of its appointed completion. The general prediction of the redeeming seed, 'It shall bruise thy head and thou shalt bruise his heel,' though adequate in the mind of God, to the determinate form of the Christian redemption, could not be so deduced into its final sense by the mind of man. And since there is no other promise or prediction extant, applicable to the faith of the first ages, and explanatory of the mode of the Christian redemption, we

can justly ascribe no other knowledge of that redemption to those ages than such as is comprehended in the proper and apparent sense of the first evangelical promise, in which the particular notion of a sacrifice of expiation or atonement, or, indeed, of any sacrifice was then impossible to be discovered. It was the office of later revelation to fill up the design of this promise, and revelation, alone, could do it. For the deductions of supernatural truth are not within the sphere of human intellect. They are not to be inferred as discoverable conclusions from one primary principle. A Redeemer being foretold, his Divine nature, his incarnation, the vicarious nature of his sufferings, his death, and the atoning efficacy of it, all these, though real connections of truth, comprehended with the original promise, in the scheme of the Divine economy, came down to man, like new streams of light, by these separate channels, and when they are communicated in their proper form, then we know them; not before." (*Inquiry, &c.*)

One very misleading notion, as the reader will perceive from what has been already said, lies at the bottom of these remarks. It is assumed contrary to evidence. that the book of Genesis is a complete history of the religious opinions of the patriarchs, and that they knew nothing on the subject of theology but what appears on the face of the account given by Moses, who touches their theological system but incidentally. We say that this notion is unfounded, not only because we must necessarily infer, that in order to be religious, nay even moral men, they knew much more than the rapid Mosaic sketch includes; but we conclude this fact on the authority of the inspired writers of the New Testament. Thus, for instance, we have seen that Abraham had a revelation of a future state, and that Enoch prophesied of the "coming of the Lord to judgment, with thousands of his saints," though neither of those revelations are recorded by Moses. But though this is sufficient to show that the view taken of the primitive theology, by Mr. Davison, and those whose opinions he has undertaken to advocate, is far too narrow, and that his conclusions, from such premises, must be unsatisfactory; it is not on this ground that his notion of the general and indefinite nature of the first promise shall be refuted. Let it be forgotten, for a moment, that Adam was naturally the religious head and religious teacher of his family; that there was always an inspiration in the Church of God; that the general promises and prophecies were adapted to excite inquiry; and that spiritual men would always, more or less, as now, be led into the mystery veiled under the letter and symbol; yet, taking the prophecy simply by itself, it will be obvious from a careful consideration of it, that the view just given does not do it justice, and that it must have been more amply and more particularly understood than Mr. Davison, in support of his hypothesis, would represent. He would have it taken so generally as to be incapable of inter-

pretation "into the several parts of its appointed completion," and to be only able to convey some one general notion of a deliverer. But why are we to confine it to one general indistinct impression? Why, though the several parts of this prophetic promise should be allowed to be comparatively obscure, and their impression to be general, should it not be considered in the parts of which it is actually composed? and why should not each part have been apprehended separately and distinctively, though yet obscurely? Of several parts the prophecy is, in fact, composed, and to these parts, as well as to the general impression made by the whole, must the attention of the patriarchs have been necessarily directed. The Divine nature, the incarnation, the vicarious nature of Messiah's sufferings, and their atoning efficacy, we are told, came to man "by separate channels," and were not in any way to be apprehended in this promise. In their farther and full development we grant this; but let us see whether this promise, "interpreted even by itself," must not have led the patriarchs many steps, at least, toward all these doctrines.

The Divine nature of the promised Redeemer, we are told, was a separate revelation; but, surely, this promise clearly indicated that he was to be of a superior nature, not only to man, but to that fell spirit whom he was to subdue, and whose subtlety, power, and malice, our first parents had so lamentably experienced; that he was to deprive him of that dominion which he had acquired over man, and restore the world from the evil effects which it had sustained from the success of his temptations. This was seen in the promise by an easy and natural interpretation, and the step from this to the absolute Divinity of this Restorer, or, at least, to an apprehension of the probability of it, was certainly not a large and difficult one. The blessings, too, which he was to procure for sinful man were of such a nature as to give the most exalted ideas of the being who could bring them back to man when forfeited by a most righteous sentence. They were *spiritual* blessings. For, if our first parents were to derive any consolation or benefit from the promise in this life; if it was to turn their repentance to any account; or to give them any hope and confidence toward God, whom they had offended, to be assured that the head of the serpent should be bruised, then their attention must have been turned to spiritual blessings as the result of this, since in this life they neither obtained exemption from labour, suffering, or death. Now those who adopt the principle of Mr. Davison, and will allow of no revelations in those ages being assumed but those which are recorded by Moses, are bound to allow that there was in the promise something which was intended to give religious hope and comfort to the first pair, and to their immediate posterity, or they cannot account for the existence of religious worship and the hope which it implies, since there is no other recorded promise

of the same antiquity, and they will allow nothing to be assumed beside what is written. If, then, this first promise ministered to the religious hope, faith, and comfort of our first parents, it turned that hope to the spiritual blessings which they had lost, namely, the favour of God and eternal life, and to these as coming to them through the *bruising of the head of the serpent by the seed of the woman.* The same conclusion we must come to, if we adopt what we appear compelled to do, on apostolic authority, the doctrine of collateral expository revelations, for these would throw light upon the figurative and symbolic terms of the promise, and show much of its real and spiritual import. In either case we must resort to this promise as the source of that hope of pardon and spiritual victory, which, from the time it was given, became an inmate in the bosoms of faithful men, and animated them in their moral conflicts. Whoever, then, the seed of the woman might be, he was, in this very promise, exhibited as the Restorer of the all-important spiritual blessings of the Divine favour, power over Satan, and eternal life. Thus their notions of his character, and, indeed, of his superior nature, would be still farther advanced.

But the bruising of the head of Satan, which could only be understood of a fatal blow to be inflicted on the power which he had acquired over man, and which had displayed itself in the introduction of suffering and death, in the evil dispositions of men toward each other, and all the miseries which so soon sprung up in society, directed their hope also to future blessings as to themselves and their posterity, which blessings could be no less than deliverance from the evils which the subtlety of the serpent had introduced, namely, as to them, deliverance from affliction and death; and, as to society, a return to primeval purity. Whether they looked for this deliverance by a renovation of the present world, or by the introduction of the pious into another, we cannot say. If our first parents were, for some time, uncertain as to this point, the antediluvian family could not long remain so, since the doctrine of a future life was known to Enoch, and, if not before, was revealed to others by the fact of his translation, and he was but "the seventh from Adam." But whether by the renovation of the earth, and the restoration of the body of man to immortality in this world, or by the resurrection of the body and the glorification of the soul in a future state, still was such a restoration implied in the promise, and the person by whom death was to be conquered and sin expelled from man's heart, and immortality and bliss restored, was still "the seed of the woman." That the Divinity of a being capable of bestowing such favours, was, at least, indicated in the first promise, is not, therefore, too strong a conclusion; and though new communications of this truth, coming through "separate channels," illustrated the text of this revelation, yet in the channel of the original promise, through which came the first

hope of "a Redeemer," we see those concomitant circumstances from which it could not but be inferred, that he was, at least, *super-human* and *super-angelic*. He was the seed of the woman, and yet superior to "the archangel fallen"—and he was seen in that promise, as he is seen now, though with greater detail of circumstance, as the great medium of pardon, moral renovation, immortality, and eternal life.

It is equally untenable to say, that the doctrine of the incarnation was not to be deduced from the promise before us, but that this also came by "a separate channel." The farther revelation of this truth opened for itself various courses, but it is there also. The being there spoken of as superior to the serpent, and as so superior to man, even in his innocence and perfection, that he should subdue the *power* which had subdued Adam, and recover what Adam lost, was, nevertheless, to be "the SEED of the woman:" to be her offspring even in her fallen state; so that in truth so much of the doctrine of the incarnation was to be deduced from the promise, that this "seed of the woman" was at once to be *man*, and *more than man*. And then for the doctrine of his "vicarious sufferings," and their efficacy, why should we be compelled wholly to look for the first indication of this to revelations coming to man through separate and later channels? These, we again thankfully acknowledge, have been abundantly opened; but, if we allow Adam and the patriarchs to have been men of but common powers of reflection, (though to them a very vigorous and even cultivated intellect might in justice be conceded,) then the first indication of this truth also must have been seen in the first promise. It was comparatively dim and obscure we grant; but there was a substantive manifestation of it; and, to say nothing of collateral instruction from GOD himself, it was apprehended in the first promise, not by difficult and distant, but by near and natural inference, that the restoration of man should be effected by the sufferings of the Restorer. For what could be understood by the bruising of the heel of the seed of the woman in the conflict which was to spring from the enmity put between that seed, some one distinguished person so called, and the serpent, but a temporary injury and suffering! and why should he sustain the injury rather than any other descendant of the woman, except that the conflict, in which he engaged, was in his character of Redeemer, coming forth to the struggle for man's sake, and for man's rescue? As he was a being superior to man, and yet *man*, then is there an indication of his incarnation; if of his incarnation, then it was indicated also that his sufferings were voluntary, for to suffer could not spring from his weakness who was able to subdue, but from the will of him who chose, in this way, to subdue the grand enemy. His suffering, then, was *for* man, and it was voluntary suffering for man; and if voluntary, then was there a connection between this his temporary voluntary suffering and the bruising of the serpent's

head, that is, his conquest over Satan, and the rescue of man from his dominion; in other words, there was an efficacy in his sufferings which connected themselves, not by *accident*, but by *appointment* and *institution*, with man's salvation from those evils, spiritual and corporal, which had been induced by the power and malice of the devil.

Interpreted then by itself, there is much more in this promise than Mr. Davison has discovered in it. It exhibited to man the means of his salvation; this was to be effected by the interposition of a being of a superior nature, made "the seed of the woman;" his office was to destroy the works of the devil; he exposed himself to voluntary sufferings for this end; these sufferings had a direct efficacy and connection with man's deliverance from the power of Satan, and, therefore, we may add, with the justice of God, since Satan could have no power over man but by God's permission, which permission was a part of man's righteous punishment. This last consideration is of great importance. For as the patriarchs, with their lofty and clear notions of the majesty of the Divine being, could not suppose that Satan had obtained any victory over him, or that the conflict between the Redeemer and him was to be one of *power* merely, since they must have known that he might at any time have been expelled from his usurped dominion by the fiat of the Almighty; so the dominion of Satan must have been regarded by them in the light of a judicial permission for the punishment of sin, and exhibiting the awful justice and sanctity of the law of God. It would, therefore, necessarily follow, in their reasonings on this subject, that the sufferings of the seed of the woman, expressed by the bruising of his heel, as they were demonstrated to be voluntary on his part by the superior greatness of his nature, and were expressly appointed on the part of God, as appears from the very terms of the first promise, were connected with this exercise of punitive justice, and were designed to remove it. Here, then, the notion of satisfaction and atonement breaks in, and a basis was laid for the rite of expiatory sacrifice, and the conformity of that rite to the doctrine of the first promise is at once seen; it thus became a visible expression of the faith of the fathers in this appointed method of man's deliverance.

There is nothing in this exposition of the import of the first promise which is so suggested by what we now know on these important subjects, as to be supposed out of the reach of the spiritually minded and reflecting part of the first family; and if so, then this promise may be considered as the basis of Abel's faith, and its doctrine as visibly embodied in what was peculiar in Abel's offering. Even if we were not able to refer to a promise sufficiently definite to support *such* an expression of faith, the former view we have taken would still hold good, that all faith necessarily supposes a previous revelation; and if faith does, by its acts, refer to a particular revelation, then an actual previous

revelation of some particular doctrine, object, or view, must necessarily be supposed, or it is not faith, but fancy and presumption.

It is vainly urged against this, by Mr. Davison, that the faith spoken of by St. Paul in Hebrews xi, had for its simple and general object, that "God is the rewarder of such as diligently seek him." For, though this is supposed as the ground of every act of faith, yet the special acts recorded have each their special object. Even, if it were not so, this general principle itself is not to be so generally and indefinitely interpreted, as Mr. Davison would have it, who tells us that the first creed was "that God is a rewarder," and that the other articles were given by successive and distant revelations. This is a partial and delusive statement; for, from this very text, which surely Mr. Davison had no right to curtail, another article is to be assigned to the first creed, namely, that God is not merely a rewarder, but a rewarder of those "that *diligently seek him*." Even with respect to the first, as Mr. Lax justly observes, "God cannot be considered as a *rewarder of* mankind in any other sense than as he is a *fulfiller* of his promises made to mankind in the covenant of Messiah. For God could not give, nor man receive, any rewards or blessings, but in and through one Mediator, Christ Jesus." (*Confutation of Warburton.*) But we may add, that the *rewarding* mentioned by the apostle is connected with "*seeking*" him. Only to such he was or is a reward "who diligently seek him," and this seeking or worshipping God supposes some appointed instituted method of approaching him, and which, therefore, must be regarded by an acceptable faith, and recognized by its external acts. This is not mere inference, for both Cain and Abel believed that "God is, and that he is a rewarder," and they both sought him; but they sought him differently, and to Abel only and to his offering, that is, to his mode of "*seeking*" God, his Maker had respect. But farther, the whole chapter shows that, beside this general principle, the acts of faith there recorded reposed on antecedent revelations, either general or specific, which accorded with them. Noah's faith respected the promise of his preservation in the ark; Abraham's, that he should have a son, that his seed should possess the earthly Canaan, and he himself the heavenly Canaan; Moses's faith, in the first instance recorded of it, respected the promises of spiritual and eternal blessings to those who should renounce the "pleasures of sin for a season," and in the second, the promise of God to deliver Israel, and to fulfil the promise made to Abraham; and so also in the other instances given, the faith constantly respected some particular revelation from God. From all this, it will follow, that the apostle, in this chapter, did not intend to say that the object of faith, in any age whatever, was exclusively, that God is a rewarder of them who seek him, but that the elders who obtained the "good report" had faith in the word and promises of God, and for that had been honoured

and rewarded. He lays down two principles, it is true, which must be assumed before any special act of faith can be exercised—"That God is," or there could be no object of trust; and that he rewards them that "diligently seek him," or there could be no motive to prayer, or to ask his interposition in any case; but these principles being admitted, then every word and promise of God becomes an object of faith to good men, who derive from this habit of trusting in God, on the authority of his own engagements, that courage and constancy by which they are distinguished, and are crowned with those rewards which he has always attached to faith.

And here, also, we may observe, that the notion stated above, that the mere belief by these ancient patriarchs that God is, and "that he is a rewarder," could not be at all apposite to the purpose for which this recital of the faith of the elders was addressed to the Hebrews. The object of it was clearly to induce the Jews who believed, not "to cast away their *confidence*," their faith in Christ. But what adaptation to this end can we discern in the dry statement that Abel and Enoch believed that God is, and that he is "a rewarder?" Had the Hebrews renounced Christ, and turned Jews again, they would still have believed these two points of doctrine. There are but two views of this recital of the instances of ancient faith which can harmonize it with the apostle's argument and design. The first is to consider him as adducing this list of worthies as examples of a steady faith in all that God had then revealed to man, and of the happy effects which followed. The connection of this with his argument will then be obvious; for, by these examples, he urges the Hebrews to persevere in believing all that God had, "in these last days," revealed of his Son, Jesus Christ, in disregard of the dangers and persecutions to which they were exposed on that account; because thus they would share in the "good report" and in the rewards of the "elders" of their own Church, and imitate the honourable piety of their ancestry. This is enough for our argument. But there is a second view, not to be slightly passed over, which is, that these instances of ancient faith are adduced by the apostle to prove that all the "elders" of the patriarchal and Jewish Churches had faith in THE CHRIST TO COME, and that, therefore, the Hebrews would be the imitators of their faith and the partakers of its rewards in "holding fast their confidence," their faith in the same Christ who had already come, and whom they had received as such. Nor is even this stronger view difficult to be made out; for, though the different acts and exercises of faith ascribed to them have respect to different promises and revelations, some spiritual, some temporal, and some mixed, yet may we trace in all of them a respect, more or less immediate, to the leading object of all faith, the Messiah himself. We have seen that Abel's faith had respect to the method of man's justification, through the sufferings of the seed of the woman.

As that seed was appointed to remedy the evils brought into the world by the serpent, it is clear that eternal life could only be expected with reference to him, and Enoch's lofty faith in a future heavenly state consequently looked to him then, like ours now, as "the author of eternal salvation to them that obey him,"—a conclusion, as to this patriarch, which is rendered stronger by his prophecy of Christ's coming to judgment "with ten thousand of his saints." Noah's faith had immediate respect to the promise of God to preserve him in the ark; but it cannot be disconnected from his faith in the first promise and other revelations of the bruising of the head of the serpent by Messiah, a promise which had not been accomplished, and which, if he believed God to be faithful, he must have concluded could not fall to the ground, and that his preservation, in order to prevent the human race from extinction, and to bring in the seed of the woman, in the fulness of time, was connected with it. His faith in God, as his deliverer, was bound up, therefore, we may almost say necessarily, with his faith in the Redeemer, and the one was the evidence of the other; for which reason, principally, it probably was, that the apostle says "that he became heir of the righteousness which is by faith." All the acts of Abraham's faith had respect, immediately or ultimately, to the promised seed. The possession of Canaan by his posterity, from whom the Messiah was to spring,—the enjoyment of eternal life for himself, which was the final effect of his justification by faith in the seed in whom all nations were to be blessed,—the transaction as to Isaac, when he believed that God would raise him from the dead, because he believed that the promise could not fail which had declared that the Messiah should spring from Isaac,—"In Isaac shall thy seed be called." The faith of Isaac, in blessing, or prophesying of the condition of Jacob and Esau, had still reference to the Messiah, who was to descend from Jacob, not Esau, and the lot of whose posterity was regulated accordingly. The same observation may be made as to Jacob blessing the sons of Joseph, and Joseph's making mention of the departure of the children of Israel, and giving commandment concerning his bones: both related to the settlement of the tribes in Canaan, and both were complicated with the relation of that event to, and the peculiarity stamped upon Israel, by the expected coming of Messias. When Moses, by faith, full of the hopes of immortality, renounced the temptations of the Egyptian court, the reproach he endured is called "the reproach of Christ," the apostle thus plainly intimating, that it was through the expected Messiah that he looked for the hope of eternal life, "the recompense of the reward." His faith, as leader of the hosts of Israel, was connected with the promises of God to give them possession of the land of Canaan as their patrimony, as that was with the advent of the Messiah among them "in the fulness of time." The faith of Rahab may appear more remotely connected with the promise of

Messiah: but the connection may still be traced. She believed in the God of Israel as the true God; but by entertaining and preserving the spies, she also intimated her faith in the promise of God to give the descendants of Abraham the land of Canaan for their inheritance, which design she could only know from the promises made to Abraham, either traditionally from him, who had himself long resided in Canaan, or by information from the spies; and if she had this knowledge in either way, it is not difficult to suppose her informed, also, as to *the seed* promised to Abraham, in which all the nations of the earth were to be blessed. I incline to think, that the faith of Rahab had respect not so much to any information she received from the spies, as to traditions derived from Abraham. Whether she stood, by her descent, in any near relation to those with whom Abraham had more immediately conversed, or whether Abraham had very publicly testified in Canaan God's design to establish his posterity there, and to raise up from among them the holy seed, the Messiah, I will not pretend to determine; but there are two reasons which, at least, make it probable that Abraham gave a *public* testimony to religious truth during his residence in Canaan. The first is, his residence in tents; thereby "*declaring plainly*," says the Apostle Paul, "that he sought a better country, even a heavenly;" that is, declaring it to the Canaanites, or the action would have had no meaning, declaring this doctrine to the people of his own age. The second is, that the same apostle gives it as a reason for the preservation of Rahab, that she believed, while those "that believed not" perished, meaning plainly the rest of the Canaanites. Now, what were they to believe, and why were they guilty for not believing? The only rational answer to be given is, that they had had the means of knowing the designs of God, as to Abraham and his posterity, from whom the promised Messiah was to spring; and that, not crediting the testimony given first by Abraham, and which was afterward confirmed by the wonders of Egypt, but setting themselves against the designs of God, they "perished" judicially, while Rahab, on account of her faith in these revelations, was preserved.

With respect to "Gideon, and Barak, and Samson, and Jephthah, and Daniel, and Samuel," they were judges, kings, and conquerors. They had a lofty faith in the special promises of success, which God was pleased to make to them; but that faith, also, sprung from, and was supported by, the special relation in which their nation stood to Jehovah; they were the seed of Abraham; they held their land by the grant of the Most High; they were all taught to look for the rising of the mighty prince Messiah among them; and their faith in special promises of success, could not but have respect to all these covenant engagements of God with their people, and may be considered as in no small degree grounded upon them, and, in its special acts, as an evidence that they had this faith in the deeper and more comprehensive

promises. Certain it is, that one of them mentioned in this list of warriors, David, does, in the very songs in which he celebrates his victories, almost constantly blend them with the conquests of Messiah; which is itself a marked and eminent proof of the connection which was constantly kept up in the minds of the pious governors of Israel between the political fortunes of their nation and the promises which respected the seed of Abraham. As to the prophets, also mentioned by the apostle, they were constantly made the channels of new revelations as to the Messiah, and their faith, therefore, had an immediate reference to him; and for the sufferers in the cause of religious truth, so honourably recorded, the martyrs of the Old Testament who had "trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, were stoned, sawn asunder," &c, they are all represented as supported by their hope of immortality and a resurrection; blessings which, from the first, were acknowledged to come to man only through the appointed Redeemer. Thus the *faith of all had respect to Christ*, either more directly or remotely; and, if farther proof were necessary, all that has been said is crowned by the concluding sentence of the apostle—"and these all having obtained a good report, through faith, received not the promise, God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect;" which "better thing," whether it mean the personal appearance of Messiah, or their reception into heaven by a resurrection, which God determined should not take place as to the Church separately, but in a body, proves that not only did their faith look *back* to special promises of succour, deliverance, and other blessings; but was constantly looking *forward* to Christ, and to the blessings of a resurrection and eternal life, which he was to bestow. This, he affirms, too, was the case with ALL whom he had mentioned—"these ALL DIED in the faith;" but in what faith did they die? not the faith they had in the promises of the various deliverances mentioned in the chapter; those special acts of faith were past, and the special promises to which they were directed were obtained long before death: they died in the faith of unaccomplished promises—the appearance of Messiah, and the obtaining of eternal life through him.

Enough has been said to prove, that the sacrifice of Abel was expiatory, and that it conformed, as an act of faith, to some anterior revelation. If that revelation were only that which is recorded in the first promise, on which some remarks have been offered, Abel's faith accorded with its general indication of the doctrine of vicarious suffering; but his visibly representing his faith in these doctrines, by an animal sacrifice, is not to be resolved into the invention and device of Abel, though he himself should be assumed to have been the first to adopt this rite, unless we suppose him to have been under special direction. It is very true, and a point not to be at any time lost sight of, that the

open and marked acceptance of Abel's sacrifice was a Divine confirmation of the mode of approaching him by animal sacrifice; and seems to have been intended as instructive and admonitory to the world, and to have invested this mode of worship with a renewed and more signal stamp of Divine appointment than heretofore. That in this light it was considered by the apostle, appears plainly deducible from his words, "and by it, (his sacrifice,) he being dead, yet speaketh." By words more emphatic he could not have marked the importance of that act, as an act of public and sanctioned instruction. Abel "spoke" to all succeeding ages, and continues to speak, not by his personal righteousness, not by any other circumstance whatever, but by his sacrifice, (for with θυσιας understood, must αυτης agree;) and in no way could he, except by his sacrifice as distinct from that of Cain, speak to future ages, and as that sacrifice taught how sinful guilty men were to approach God, and was a declaration of the necessity of atonement for their sins. We should think this a sufficient answer to all who complain of the want of an express indication of the Divine appointment of animal expiatory sacrifice in the first family. The indication called for is here express, since this kind of sacrifice was accepted, and an offering, not animal and not expiatory, was as publicly rejected; and since, also, Abel, as we may conclude from the apostle's emphatic words, did not act in this affair merely as a private man; but as one who was, by his acts, to instruct and influence others—"by it he, being dead, yet," even to this day, "speaketh."

Decidedly, however, as this circumstance marked out a sanctioned method of approaching God, we think that Abel rather conformed to a previously appointed sacrificial institution than then, for the first time, offered an animal and expiatory sacrifice, though it should be supposed to be under a Divine direction. For Cain could not have been so blamable had he not violated some *rule*, some *instituted* practice, as to the mode of worship; and, after all that has been said, the clothing of our first parents with the *skins of beasts*, cannot so well be accounted for as by supposing those skins to have been taken from animals offered in sacrifice.

But whether this typical method of representing the future atonement first took place with Abel, or previously with Adam, a Divine origin must be assigned to it. The proof of this has been greatly anticipated in the above observations, which have been designed to establish the expiatory character of Abel's offering; but a few additional remarks on this subject may not be useless.

The human invention of primitive animal sacrifice is a point given up by Mr. Davison, and other writers on the same side, if such sacrifices can be proved expiatory. The human invention of eucharistic offerings they can conceive; and Mr. Davison thinks he can find a natural ex

planation of the practice of offering *animal* sacrifice, if considered as a confession of guilt; but for "that condition of animal sacrifice, its expiatory atoning power," he observes, "I confess myself unable to comprehend how it can ever be grounded on the principles of reason, or deduced from the light of nature. There exists no discernible connection between the one and the other. On the contrary, nature has nothing to say for such an expiatory power, and reason every thing against it. For that the life of a brute creature should ransom the life of a man; that its blood should have any virtue to wash away his sin, or purify his conscience, or redeem his penalty; or that the involuntary sufferings of a being, itself unconscious and irrational, should have a moral efficacy to his benefit or pardon, or be able to restore him with God, these are things repugnant to the sense of reason, incapable of being brought into the scale of the first ideas of nature, and contradictory to all genuine religion, natural and revealed. For as to the remission of sin, it is plainly altogether within the prerogative of God, an act of his mere mercy; and since it is so, every thing relating to the *conveyance* and the *sanction*, the *profession*, and the *security* of it, can spring only from his appointment."

But this being allowed, and nothing can be more obvious, then it follows, that the patriarchal sacrifices, if proved to be expiatory, as the means of removing wrath from offenders, and of conveying and sanctioning pardon, must be allowed to have had Divine institution, and the notion of their being of human device, must, in consequence, be given up. In proof of this, we have seen that Abel's justification was the result of his *faith*, and that this faith was connected with *that* in his sacrifice which distinguished it from the offering of Cain; and thus its expiatory character is established by its having been the means to him of the remission of sin; and the appointed medium of the "*conveyance*" and "*security*" of the benefit. We have also seen, that Noah's burnt offering was connected with the averting of the wrath of God from the future world, so that not even its wickedness should lead him again "to destroy all flesh" by a universal flood; that the sacrifices of the friends of Job (5) were of the same expiatory character; and that the reason for the prohibition of blood was, under both dispensations, the patriarchal

(5) Mr. Davison, in pursuance of his theory, that the patriarchal sacrifices were not expiatory, has strangely averred, that this transaction is "a proof of the efficacy of Job's prayer, not of the *expiatory power* of the sacrifice of his friends." Why, then, was not the prayer efficacious, without the sacrifice? And how could the "burnt offering" of his friends give efficacy to his prayer, unless by way of expiation? What is the office of expiatory sacrifice, but to avert the anger of God from the offerer? This was precisely the effect of the burnt offering of Eliphaz and his friends: that it was connected with the prayer of Job, no more alters the expiatory character of that offering, than the prayers which accompanied such offerings under the law.

and the Mosaic, the same. To these may be added two passages in Exodus, which show that animal sacrifices, among the patriarchs, were offered for averting the Divine displeasure, and that this notion of sacrifice was entertained by the Israelites, *previous* to the giving of the law. "Let us go, I pray thee, three days' journey into the desert, and sacrifice unto the Lord our God, *lest he fall upon us with pestilence, or with the sword*," Exodus v, 3. "Thou must give us also sacrifices and burnt offerings, that we may sacrifice unto the Lord our God," Exodus x, 25, 26. The remark of Dr. Richie (*Pec. Doc.*) is here pertinent. "In these two passages Moses and Aaron speak of sacrificing not as a new and uncommon thing, but as a usual mode of worship, with which Pharaoh was as well acquainted as themselves, consequently a thing that was not a late or new invention." And in pursuance of the same argument it may be noted, that Moses, even in the law, nowhere speaks of expiatory sacrifice as a new institution, a rite which was henceforward to be considered as bearing a higher character than formerly; but as a thing familiar to the people. Now such an intimation would, doubtless, have been necessary on the very ground just stated, the repugnancy of animal sacrifices, considered as *expiatory*, to nature and reason; but to prepare them for such a change, for an institution so repugnant to the former class and order of their notions on this subject, there is nothing said by Moses, no intimation of an alteration in the character of sacrifice is given; but a practice manifestly familiar is brought under new and special rules, assigned to certain persons as the sacrificers, and to certain places, and appropriated to the national religion, and the system of a theocratical government. Whence, then, did this familiarity with the notion of expiatory sacrifice arise among the Israelites? If the book of Genesis were written previously to the law, and they collected the notion from that, then this is proof that they understood the patriarchal sacrifices to be expiatory; and if, as others think, that book was not written the first in the series of the Pentateuch, but the last, they had the notion from tradition and custom.

Though we think that the evidence of Scripture is of sufficient clearness to establish the Divine origin of the antediluvian sacrifices; and with Hallet, (in Hebrews xi, 4,) regard the public Divine acceptance of Abel's sacrifice as amounting to a *demonstration* of their institution by the authority of God, the argument drawn from the *natural incongruity* of sacrificial rites, on which so many writers have forcibly dwelt, ought not to be overlooked. It comes in to confirm the above deductions from Scripture, and though it has been sometimes attacked with great ingenuity, it has never been solidly refuted. "It is evident," says Delany, (*Revelation Examined*,) "that unprejudiced reason never could antecedently dictate, that destroying the best of our fruits and creatures could be an office acceptable to God, but quite the contrary. Also, that it

did not prevail from any demand of nature is undeniable, for I believe that no man will say that we have any natural instinct or appetite to gratify in spilling the blood of an innocent, inoffensive creature upon the earth, or burning his body upon an altar. Nor could there be any temptation from appetite to do this in those ages, when the whole sacrifice was consumed by fire, or when, if it were not, yet men wholly abstained from flesh."

The practice cannot be resolved into *priestcraft*, for no order of priests was then instituted; and if men resolve it into *superstition*, they must not only suppose that the first family were superstitious, but, also, that God, by his acceptance of Abel's sacrifice, gave his sanction to a superstitious and irrational practice; and if none will be so bold as this, there remains no other resource, than to contend for its *reasonableness*, in opposition to the argument just quoted from Delany; and to aid the case by assuming, also, that it was the dictate of a delicate and enlightened sentimentalism. This is the course taken by Mr. Davison, who has placed what others have urged with the same intent, in the most forcible light, so that, in refuting him, we refute all. To begin with "the more simple forms of oblation;" those offerings of the fruits of the earth, which have been termed eucharistical, "reason," says Mr. Davison, "seems to recognize them at once; they are the tokens of a commemorative piety, rendering to the Creator and supreme Giver a portion of his gifts, in confession of his original dominion in them, and of his continued favour and beneficence." But this is very far from being a rational account of even simple thank offerings of fruits; supposing such offerings to have been really made in those primitive times. Of this, in fact, we have no evidence, for we read only of one oblation of this kind, that of Cain, and it was not accepted by God. But waiving that objection, and supposing such offerings to have formed a part of the primitive worship, from whence, we may ask, did men obtain the notion, that in such acts they *gave back* to the supreme Giver some portion of his gifts? It is not, surely, assumed by the advocates of this theory, that the first men were like those stupid idolaters of following ages, who thought that the deities themselves feasted upon the oblations brought to their temples. On the contrary, their views of God were elevated and spiritual; and whenever such a Being is acknowledged, it is clear, that the notion of *giving back* any thing to him, can only be a rational one, when he has *appointed* something to be done in return for his gifts, or to be appropriated to his service; which leads us at once to the doctrine of a Divine institution. The only rational notion of a *return* to God as an acknowledgment for his favours, when notions of his spirituality and independence are entertained, is that of gratitude, and thanksgiving, and obedience. These form "a reasonable service;" but when we go beyond these, we may well be at a loss to know "what we can give unto

him." If he requires more than these, as acknowledgments of our dependence and his goodness, how should we know that he requires more, unless we had some revelation on the subject? And if we had a general revelation, importing that something more would be acceptable, how should we be able to fix upon one particular thing, as the subject of such an oblation, more than another? A Divine institution would invest such offerings with a symbolical, or a typical character, or both; and then they would have a manifest *reason;* but, assuredly, independent of that, they would rest upon no rational ground whatever; there could be no discernible connection between the act and the end, in any case where the majesty and spirituality of God were recognized. Mr. Davison assumes that, though "the prayer or the oblation cannot *purchase* the favour of God, it may make us fitter objects of his favour." But, we ask, even if we should allow that *prayer* makes us fitter objects of his favour, how we could know even this without revelation; or, if we could place this effect to the account of prayer by something like a rational deduction, how we could get the idea, that to approach a *spiritual* Being, with a few handfuls of fruit gathered from the earth, and to present them in addition to our prayers, should render us the "fitter objects" of the Divine beneficence? There is no rational connection between the act and the end, on which to establish the conclusion.

Reason failing here, recourse is had to sentiment.

"In the first dawn of the world, and the beginnings of religion, it is reasonable to think that the direction of feeling and duty was more exclusively toward God. The recent creation of the world, the revelations in paradise, and the great transactions of his providence, may well be thought to have wrought a powerful impression on the first race, and to have given them, though not a purer knowledge, yet a more intimate and a more intense perception, of his being and presence.—The continued miracle of the actual manifestations of God would enforce the same impressions upon them. These having less scope of action in communion with their fellow creatures, in the solitude of life around them, in the great simplicity of the social state, and the consequent destitution of the objects of the social duties; their religion would make the acts of devotion its chief monuments of moral obligation. Works of justice and charity could have little place. Works of adoration must fill the void. And it is real action, not unembodied sentiment, which the Creator has made to be the master principle of our moral constitution. From these causes some boldness in the form of a representative character, some ritual clothed with the imagery of a symbolical expression, would more readily pass into the first liturgy of nature. Not simple adoration, not the naked and unadorned oblations of the tongue; but adoration invested in some striking and significative form, and conveyed

by the instrumentality of material tokens, would be most in accordance with the strong energies of feeling, and the insulated condition of the primitive race." (*Primitive Sac.*)

Two or three observations will be sufficient to dissipate all these fancy pictures. 1. It is not true, that the "recent creation of the world, the revelations in paradise," &c, made that great moral impression upon the first men which is here described. That impression did not keep our first parents from sin; much less did it produce this effect upon Cain and his descendants; nor upon "the sons of God," the race of Seth, who soon became corrupt; and so wickedness rapidly increased, until the measure of the sin of the world was filled up. 2. It is equally unfounded, that in that state of society "works of justice and charity could have little place, and that works of adoration must fill the void;" for the crimes laid to the charge of the antediluvians are wickedness, and especially *violence*, which is opposed both to *justice* and to *charity;* and it is impossible to suppose any state of society existing, since the fall, in which both justice and charity were not virtues of daily requirement, and that in their constant and vigorous exercise. Cain, for instance, needed both, for he grossly violated both in hating and murdering his brother. 3. That strongly active devotional sentiment which Mr. Davison supposes to exist in those ages, which required something more to embody and represent it than prayer and praise, and which with so much plastic energy is assumed to have clothed *itself* "with the imagery of a symbolical expression," is equally contradicted by the facts of the case. There was no such *excess* of the devotional principle. On Mr. Davison's own interpretation of the "more abundant sacrifice," *more in quantity*, one of the two brothers, first descended from the first pair, was deficient in it; the rapidly spreading wickedness of man shows that the religious sentiment was weak and not powerful; it is not seen even in the perverted forms of idolatry and superstition, for neither is charged upon the antediluvians, but moral wickedness only; and instead of their having "a more intense perception of the being and presence of God," as Mr. Davison imagines for them, Moses declares "the imagination of the thoughts of the heart of man to be only evil continually," and that even long before the flood, and while men were alive who had conversed with Adam. Thus pass away the fancies on which this theory is built; nor is that of Bishop Warburton better supported, who resolves these early oblations into a *representation by action*, arising out of the "defects and imperfections of the primitive language;" for of these defects and imperfections there is not only not the least evidence, but the irresistible inference from the narrative of Moses is, that a language was in use in the first family sufficiently copious for all subjects of religion, as well as for the common intercourse of life. This notion also farther involves the

absurdity and contradiction, that when man was created in perfection, he should not be endowed with the power of embodying his thoughts in language.

If, then, the presentation of the mere fruits of the earth to God as thank offerings and acknowledgments of dependence, cannot be reasonably accounted for without supposing a Divine institution, the difficulty is increased when *animal* oblations are added to these offerings, and considered also as merely eucharistical. All the difficulties just mentioned lie with equal force against such a designation of them, with these additional considerations, 1. That the putting beasts to death is an act farther removed from the idea of a mere oblation, since nothing would, without a revelation, appear less acceptable to a merciful and benevolent being. 2. A moral objection would also interpose. Man's dominion of the creatures was from God; but it was to be exercised, like his power of every other kind, upon his responsibility. Wanton cruelty to animals must, of necessity, have been considered a moral evil. To inflict pain and death upon even the noxious animals, without so clear a necessity as should warrant it, and without its being necessary to the "subduing" of the earth, could not be thought blameless, much less upon those innoxious animals which, from the beginning, were the only subjects of sacrifice. This would be felt the more strongly before flesh had been permitted to man for food, and when, so to speak, a greater sacredness was thrown around the life of the domestic animals than afterward; nor can it appear reasonable, even if we were to allow that a sort of sentimentality might lead man to fix upon the oblation of slain beasts as an expressive ritual to be added to the "Liturgy of Nature;" that, without any authority, any intimation from Heaven that such sacrifices would be well pleasing to God, men could conclude that a mere sentimental notion of ceremonial fitness, and giving "boldness to the representative character" of worship, would be a sufficient moral reason to take of their flocks and herds, and shed their blood and burn their flesh upon altars. Mr. Davison endeavours to meet the objection to the natural *incongruity* of animal sacrifices as acts of worship, by distinguishing between the two conditions of animal sacrifice, "the guilt of the worshipper and the expiation of his sin." Expiatory sacrifice, we have seen, he gives up, as not for a moment to be referred to human invention, but thinks that there was no natural incongruity in the offering of animals as a mere acknowledgment of *guilt*, and as a *confession* of sin and the desert of *death*. But still, if we could trace any connection between this symbolical confession and the real case of man, which is difficult, if not impossible, what could lead him to the idea that more than simple confession of sin by the lips, and the penitent feelings of the heart, would be acceptable to God, if he had received no revelation on the subject? and if this, like the former, were a device of mere ceremonial sentimentalism, it was still too frail a ground

to justify his putting the inferior creatures to death, without warrant from their Creator and Preserver. It is also equally unfortunate for this theory, and, indeed, wholly fatal to it, that the distinction of *clean* and *unclean* beasts existed, as we have already seen, before the flood. Upon what, then, was this distinction founded? Not upon their qualities as good for food or otherwise, for animals were not yet granted for food; and the death of one animal would therefore have been just as appropriate as a symbol of gratitude, or as an acknowledgment of the desert of death, as another,—a horse as a heifer, a dog as a lamb. Nay, if animals were intended to represent the sinner himself, unclean and ferocious animals would have been fitter types of his fallen and sinful state; and that they were to be clean, harmless, and without spot, shows that they represented some other. The distinction of clean and unclean, however, did exist in that early period, and it is only to be accounted for by referring it to a sacrificial selection, and that upon Divine authority.

To the human invention of sacrifice, the objection of "*will worship*" has also been forcibly and triumphantly urged. "Who hath required this at your hands?" "In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." This has the force of an axiom, which, if it ought not to be applied too rigidly to the minutiæ of forms of worship when they connect themselves with authorized leading acts, yet must have a direct application to a worship which, in its substance and leading circumstance, was eminently sacrificial, if it be regarded as wholly of human device. "Thus," says Hallet, "Abel must have worshipped God in vain, if his sacrificing had been merely a commandment of his father Adam, or an invention of his own;" and he justly asks, "why we do not now offer up a bullock, a sheep, or a pigeon, as a thank offering after any remarkable deliverance, or as an evidence of our apprehensions of the demerit of sin?" The sure reason is, because we cannot know that God will accept such "will worship," and so conclude that we should herein worship God "in vain."

The Divine institution of expiatory sacrifice being thus carried up to the first ages, and to the family of the first sinning man, we perceive the unity of the three great dispensations of religion to man, the PATRIARCHAL, the LEVITICAL, and the CHRISTIAN, in the great principle, "*and without the shedding of blood there is no remission.*" But one religion has been given to man since his fall, though gradually communicated. "This may be best denominated THE MINISTRY OF RECONCILIATION, for its exclusive object, however modified externally, is to satisfy GOD's justice, through the instrumentality of the woman's predicted seed; to restore fallen man to the Divine image of holiness, by the agency of the gracious Spirit; and thus, without compromising any one of God's attributes, to reconcile an apostate race to their offended Creator." (*Faber's Horæ Mos.*)

We have now adduced the Scriptural evidence of the atonement made by the death of Christ for the sins of the world; a doctrine not speculative and indifferent, but vital to the whole scheme of Christianity; a doctrine which tends to produce the most awful sense of sin, and to afford the most solemn motive to repentance; which at once excites the most sublime views of the justice and mercy of God, and gives the most affecting exhibition of the compassion and love of Christ; which is the only ground of faith in the pardoning love of God, and the surest guard against presumption; and which, by opening access to God in prayer, keeps before man a safe and secure refuge amidst the troubles of life, and in the prospect of eternity. It is the only view, too, of the death of Christ which interprets the Holy Scriptures into a consistent and unequivocal meaning. Their language is wholly constructed upon it, and, therefore, can only be interpreted by it; it is the key to their style, their allusions, their doctrines, their prophecies, their types. All is confused and delusive without it; all clear, composed, and ordered, when placed under its illumination. To Christ under his sacrificial character, as well as in his regal claims, "give all the prophets witness;" and in this testimony all the services of the tabernacle, and the rights of the patriarchal age concur. Christ, as "the Lamb of God, was slain from the foundation of the world;" and when the world shall be no more, he will appear before his glorified saints, as "the Lamb newly slain," shedding upon them the unabated efficacy of his death for ever. Nor is it a doctrine to be rejected without imminent peril.—"Verily, verily, I say unto you, except you eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, you have no life in you;" words which, as Whitby justly observes, "clearly declare the necessity of faith in his body given, and his blood shed for the remission of sins, in order to justification and salvation."

CHAPTER XXIII.

Benefits derived to Man from the Atonement—Justification.

When we speak of benefits received by the human race, in consequence of the atonement of Christ, the truth is, that man, having forfeited good of every kind, and even life itself, by his transgression, all that remains to him more than evil in the natural world, and in the dispensations of general and particular providence, as well as all spiritual blessings put within his reach by the Gospel, are to be considered as the fruits of the death and intercession of Christ, and ought to be gratefully acknowledged as such. We enjoy nothing in our own right, and receive all from the hands of the Divine mercy. We now, however,

speak in particular of those benefits which immmediately relate to, or which constitute what in Scripture is called our SALVATION; by which term is meant the deliverance of man from the penalty, dominion, and pollution of his sins; his introduction into the Divine favour in this life; and his future and eternal felicity in another.

The grand object of our redemption was to accomplish this salvation; and the first effect of Christ's atonement, whether anticipated before his coming, as "the Lamb slain from before the foundation of the world," or when effected by his passion, was to place God and man in that new relation, from which salvation might be derived to the offender.

The only relation in which an offended sovereign and a guilty subject could stand, in mere justice, was the relation of a judge and a criminal capitally convicted. The new relation effected by the death of Christ, is, as to God, that of an offended sovereign having devised honourable means to suspend the execution of the sentence of death, and to offer terms of pardon to the condemned; and, as to man, that as the object of this compassion, he receives assurance of the placableness of God, and his readiness to forgive all his offences, and may, by the use of the prescribed means, actually obtain this favour.

To this is to be added another consideration. God is not merely disposed to forgive the offences of men upon their suit and application; but an affecting activity is ascribed in Scripture to the compassion of God. The atonement of Christ having made it morally practicable to exercise mercy, and having removed all legal obstructions out of the way of reconciliation, that mercy pours itself forth in ardent and ceaseless efforts to accomplish its own purposes, and not content with waiting the return of man in penitence and prayer, "God is in Christ reconciling the world unto himself;" that is to say, he employs various means to awaken men to a due sense of their fallen and endangered condition, and to prompt and influence them (sometimes with mighty efficacy) to seek his favour and grace, in the way which he has himself ordained in his revealed word.

The mixed and chequered external circumstances of men in this present life is a providential arrangement which is to be attributed to this design; and, viewed under this aspect, it throws an interesting light upon the condition of mankind, unknown to the wisest among those nations which have not had the benefits of revealed religion, except that some glimpses, in a few cases, may have been afforded of this doctrine by the scattered and broken rays of early tradition. Nor has this been always adverted to by those writers who have enjoyed the full manifestations of Divine truth in the Scriptures. By many, the infliction of labour, and sorrow, and disappointment upon fallen man, and the shortening of the term of human life, are considered chiefly, if not exclu-

sively, as measures adopted to prevent evil, or of restraining its overflow in society. Such ends rare, doubtless, y the wisdom of God, thus effected to a great and beneficial exteht; but there is a still higher design. These dispensations are not only instruments of prevention, but designed means of salvation, preparatory to, and co-operative with those agencies, by which that result can only be directly produced. The state of man shows, that he is under a chequered dispensation, in which justice and forbearance, mercy and correction, have all their place, and in which there is a marked adaptation to his state as a reprieved criminal; a being still guilty, but within the reach of hope. The earth is cursed; but it yields its produce to man's toil; life is prolonged in some instances and curtailed in others, and is uncertain to all; we have health and sickness; pleasures and pains; gratifications and disappointment; but as to all, in circumstances however favoured, dissatisfaction and restlessness of spirit are still felt; a thirst which nothing earthly can allay, a vacuity which nothing in our outward condition can supply. There is a manifestation of mercy to save, as well as of wisdom to prevent, and the great end of the whole is explained by the inspired record. "Lo all these things worketh God oftentimes with man, to keep back his soul from the pit." His "goodness" is designed to lead us "to repentance," his rod to teach us wisdom. "In the day of adversity consider."

Another benefit granted for the same end, is the revelation of the will of God, and the declaration of his purposes of grace as to man's actual redemption. These purposes have been declared to man, with great inequality we grant, a mystery which we are not able to explain; but we have the testimony of God in his own word, though we cannot in many cases trace the process of the revelation, that in no case, that in no nation, "has he left himself without witness." Oral revelations were made to the first men; these became the subject of tradition, and were carried into all nations, though the mercy of God, in this respect, was abused by that wilful corruption of his truth of which all have been guilty. To the Jews he was pleased to give a written record of his will; and the possession of this, in its perfect evangelical form, has become the distinguished privilege of all Christian nations, who are now exerting themselves to make the blessing universal, a result which probably is not far distant. By this direct benefit of the atonement of Christ, the *law* under which we are all placed is exhibited in its full, though reproving, perfection; the character of "Him with whom we have to do" is unveiled; the history of the redeeming acts of our Saviour is recorded; his example, his sufferings, his resurrection, and intercession, the terms of our pardon, the process of our regeneration, the bright and attractive path of obedience, are all presented to our meditations, and, surmounting the whole, is that "immortality which has been brought

to light by the Gospel." Having the revelation, also, in this written form, it is guarded against corruption, and, by the multiplication of copies in the present day, it has become a book for family reading, and private perusal and study; so that neither can we, except wilfully, remain ignorant of the important truths it contains, nor can they be long absent from the attention of the most careless; from so many quarters are they obtruded upon them.

To this great religious advantage we are to add the institution of the Christian ministry, or the appointment of men, who have been themselves reconciled to God, to preach the word of reconciliation to others; to do this publicly, in opposition to all contempt and persecution, in every place where they may be placed, and to which they can have access: to study the word of God themselves; faithfully and affectionately to administer it to persons of all conditions; and thus, by a constant activity, to keep the light of truth before the eyes of men, and to impress it upon their consciences.

These means are all accompanied with the influence of the Holy Spirit; for it is the constant doctrine of the Scriptures, that men are not left to the mere influence of a revelation of truth, and the means of salvation; but are graciously excited and effectually aided in all their endeavours to avail themselves of both. Before the flood, the Holy Spirit is represented as "striving" with men, to restrain them from their wickedness, and to lead them to repentance. This especially was his benevolent employ, as we learn from St. Peter, during the whole time that "the ark was preparing," the period in which Noah fulfilled his ministry as "preacher of righteousness" to the disobedient world. Under the law, the wicked are said to "grieve" and "resist" the Holy Spirit; and good men are seen earnestly supplicating his help, not only in extraordinary cases, and for some miraculous purpose, but in the ordinary course of religious experience and conflict. The final establishment and the moral effects flowing from Messiah's dominion, are ascribed, by the prophets, to the pouring out of the Spirit, as rain upon the parched ground, and as the opening of rivers in the desert; and that the agency of the Spirit is not confined, in the New Testament, to gifts and miraculous powers, and their effects in producing mere intellectual conviction of the truth of Christianity, but is directed to the renovation of our nature, and the carrying into full practical effect the redeeming designs of the Gospel, is manifest from numerous passages and arguments to be found in the discourses of Christ and the writings of his apostles. In our Lord's discourse with Nicodemus, he declares that the regenerate man is "born of the Spirit." He promises to send the Spirit "to convince (or reprove) the world of sin." It is by the Spirit that our Lord represents himself as carrying on the work of human salvation, after his return to heaven, and in this sense promises to abide

with his disciples for ever, and to be with them "to the end of the world." In accordance with this, the apostles ascribe the success of heir preaching, in producing moral changes in the hearts of men, to the influence of the Spirit. So far from attributing this to the extraordinary gifts with which the Spirit had furnished them, St. Paul denies that this efficacy was to be ascribed either to himself or Apollos, though both were thus richly endowed; and he expressly attributes the "increase," which followed their planting and watering, to God. The Spirit is, therefore, represented as giving life to the dead souls of men; the moral virtues are called "fruits of the Spirit;" and to be "led by the Spirit," is made the proof of our being the sons of God.

Such is the wondrous and deeply affecting doctrine of Scripture. The fruit of the death and intercession of Christ, is not only to render it consistent with a righteous government to forgive sin, but to call forth the active exercise of the love of God to man. His "good Spirit," the expressive appellation of the third person of the blessed trinity in the Old Testament, visits every heart, and connects his secret influences with outward means, to awaken the attention of man to spiritual and eternal things, and win his heart to God. (6)

To this operation, this "working of God in man," in conjunction with the written and preached word, and other means of religious instruction and excitement, is to be attributed that view of the spiritual nature of the law under which we are placed, and the extent of its demands, which produces conviction of the *fact* of sin, and at once annihilates all self righteousness, and all palliations of offence; which withers the goodly show of supposititious virtues, and brings the convicted transgressor, whatever his character may be before men, and though, in comparison of many of his fellow creatures, he may have been much less sinful, to say before God, "Behold, I am vile, what shall I answer thee." The penalty of the law, death, eternal death, being at the same time apprehended, and meditated upon, the bondage of fear, and the painful anticipations of the consequences of sin follow, and thus he is moved by a sense of danger, to look out for a remedy; and this being disclosed in the same revelation, and unfolded by the same Spirit, from whose secret influence he has received this unwonted tenderness of heart, this "broken and contrite spirit," he confesses his sins before God, and appears like the publican in the temple, smiting upon his breast, exclaiming, "God be merciful to me a sinner:"—thus at once acknowledging his own offence and unworthiness, and flying for refuge to the mercy of his offended God proclaimed to him in Christ. That which every such

(6) "Illius esse duritiem humani cordis emollire, cùm aut per salutiferam prædicationem Evangelii, aut alia quacunque ratione in pectora hominum recipitur: illum eos illuminare, et in agnitionem Dei atque in omnem viam veritatis et in totius vitæ novitatem, et perpetuam salutis spem perducere." (*Bishop Jewel.*)

convinced and awakened man needs is *mercy*, the remission of his sins, and consequent exemption from their penalty. It is only this which can take him from under the malediction of the general law which he has violated; only this which can bring him into a state of reconciliation and friendship with the Lawgiver, whose righteous displeasure he has provoked. This act of mercy is, in the New Testament, called *justification*, and to the consideration of this doctrine we must now direct our attention.

On the nature of justification, its extent, and the mode in which it is attained, it is not necessary to say, that various opinions have been asserted and defended by theologians; but before we advert to any of them, our care shall be to adduce the natural and unperverted doctrine of Scripture on a subject which it is of so much importance to apprehend clearly, in that light in which it is there presented.

The first point which we find established by the language of the New Testament is, that justification, the pardon and remission of sins, the non-imputation of sin, and the imputation of righteousness, are terms and phrases of the same import. The following passages may be given in proof:—

Luke xviii, 13, 14, "I tell you, this man went down to his house *justified*, rather than the other." Here the term "justified" must mean pardoned, since the publican confessed himself "a sinner," and asked "mercy" in that relation.

Acts xiii, 38, 39, "Be it known unto you, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you *the forgiveness of sins*; and by him, all that believe are *justified* from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." Here, also, it is plain that forgiveness of sins and justification mean the same thing, one term being used as explanatory of the other.

Romans iii, 25, 26, "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to *declare his righteousness for the remission of sins* that are past, through the forbearance of God; *to declare*, I say, at this time *his righteousness*, that he might be just, *and the justifier* of him which believeth in Jesus." To remit sins and to justify are here also represented as the same act; consequent upon a declaration of the righteousness of God, and upon our faith.

Rom. iv, 4–8, "But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him *that justifieth the ungodly*, his faith is counted for righteousness; even as David describeth the blessedness of the man unto whom God *imputeth righteousness* without works, saying, Blessed is the man whose *iniquities are forgiven*, and whose *sins are covered*; blessed is the man to whom the Lord *will not impute* sin." The quotation from David, introduced by the apostle, by way of illustrating his doctrine of the justification of the ungodly, by "counting his faith for righteousness," shows

clearly, that he considered "justification," "the imputing of righteousness," "the forgiveness of iniquities," the "covering of sin," the "non-imputation of sin," as of the same import; acts substantially equivalent one to another, though under somewhat different views, and therefore expressed by terms respectively convertible;—this variety of phrase being adopted, probably, to preserve the idea which runs throughout the whole Scripture, that in the remission or pardon of sin, Almighty God acts in his character of Ruler and Judge, showing mercy upon terms satisfactory to his justice, when he might in rigid justice have punished our transgressions to the utmost. The term justification especially is judiciary, and taken from courts of law and the proceedings of magistrates; and this judiciary character of the act of pardon is also confirmed by the relation of the parties to each other, as it is constantly exhibited in Scripture. God is an offended Sovereign; man is an offending subject. He has offended against public law, not against private obligations; and the act therefore by which he is relieved from the penalty, must be magisterial and regal. It is, also, a farther confirmation that in this process Christ is represented as a public Mediator and Advocate.

The importance of acquiring and maintaining this simple and distinct view of justification, that it is the remission of sins, as stated in the passages above quoted, will appear from the following considerations:—

1. We are taught that pardon of sin is not an act of prerogative, done *above* law; but a judicial process, done *consistently* with law. For in this process there are three parties. God, as Sovereign; "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? it is God that justifieth, who is he that condemneth?" Christ, as Advocate; not defending the guilty, but interceding for them; "It is Christ that died, yea, rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh *intercession* for us," Rom. viii, 33, 34. "And if any man sin, we have an *Advocate* with the Father," 1 John ii, 1. The third party is man, who is, by his own confession, "guilty," "a sinner," "ungodly;" for repentance in all cases precedes this remission of sins, and it both supposes and confesses offence and desert of punishment. God is Judge in this process, not, however, as it has been well expressed "by the law of creation, and of works, but by the law of redemption and grace. Not as merely just, though just; but as merciful. Not as merciful in general, and *ex nuda voluntate*, without any respect had to satisfaction; but as propitiated by the blood of Christ, and having accepted the propitiation made by his blood. Not merely propitiated by his blood, but moved by his intercession, which he makes as our Advocate in heaven; not only pleading the propitiation made and accepted, but the repentance and faith of the sinner, and the promise of the Judge before whom he pleads." (*Lawson's Theo-politica.*) Thus as pardon or justification

does not take place but upon propitiation, the mediation and intercession of a third party, and on the condition on the part of the guilty, not only of repentance, but of "faith" in Christ's "blood," which, as before established, means faith in his sacrificial death, it is not an act of mere mercy, or of prerogative; but one which consists with a righteous government, and proceeds on grounds which secure the honours of the Divine justice.

2. We are thus taught that justification has respect to particular individuals, and is to be distinguished from "that gracious constitution of God, by which, for the sake of Jesus Christ, he so far delivers all mankind from the guilt of Adam's sin, as to place them, notwithstanding their natural connection with the fallen progenitor of the human race, in a salvable state. Justification is a blessing of a much higher and more perfect character, and is not common to the human race at large, but experienced by a certain description of persons in particular." (*Bunting's Sermon on Justification.*) Thus some of our older divines properly distinguish between *sententia legis* and *sententia judicis*, that is, between legislation and judgment; between the constitution, whatever it may be, under which the sovereign decides, whether it be rigidly just or softened by mercy, and his decisions in his regal and judicial capacity themselves. Justification is, therefore, a decision under a gracious legislation, "the law of faith;" but not this legislation itself. "For if it be an act of legislation, it is then only promise, and that looks toward none in particular; but to all to whom the promise is made, in general, and presupposeth a condition to be performed. But justification presupposeth a particular person, a particular cause, a condition performed, and the performance, as already past, pleaded; and the decision proceeds accordingly." (*Lawson's Theo-politica.*) Justification becomes, therefore, a subject of personal concern, personal prayer, and personal seeking, and is to be personally experienced; nor can any one be safe in trusting to that general gracious constitution under which he is placed by the mercy of God in Christ, since that is established in order to the personal and particular justification of those who believe, but must not be confounded with it.

3. Justification, being a sentence of pardon, the Antinomian notion of eternal justification becomes a manifest absurdity. For if it be a sentence, a decision on the case of the offender, it must take place in time; for that is not a sentence which is conceived in the breast of the Judge. A sentence is pronounced, and a sentence pronounced and declared from eternity, before man was created, when no sin had been committed, no law published, no Saviour promised, no faith exercised, when, in a word, no being existed but God himself, is not only absurd, but impossible, for it would have been a decision declared to none, and therefore not declared at all: and if, as they say, the sentence was passed in eternity, but manifested in time, it might from thence be as

rightly argued that the world was created from eternity, and that the work of creation in the beginning of time, was only a manifestation of that which was from everlasting. It is the guilty who are pardoned—"he justifieth the ungodly;" guilt, therefore, precedes pardon: while that remains, so far are any from being justified, that they are "under wrath," in a state of "condemnation," with which a state of justification cannot consist, for the contradiction is palpable; so that the advocates of this wild notion must either give up justification in eternity, or a state of condemnation in time. If they hold the former, they contradict common sense; if they deny the latter, they deny the Scriptures.

4. Justification, being the pardon of sin, this view of the doctrine guards us against the notion, that it is an act of God by which we are made actually just and righteous. "This is sanctification, which is, indeed, the immediate fruit of justification; but, nevertheless, is a distinct gift of God, and of a totally different nature. The one implies what God does *for us* through his Son; the other, what God works *in us* by his Spirit. So that, although some rare instances may be found, wherein the terms justified and justification are used in so wide a sense as to include sanctification also, yet in general use they are sufficiently distinguished from each other both by St. Paul and the other inspired writers." (*Wesley's Sermons.*)

5. Justification, being the pardon of sin by judicial sentence of the offended Majesty of heaven, under a gracious constitution, the term affords no ground for the notion, that it imports the imputation or accounting to us the active and passive righteousness of Christ, so as to make us both relatively and positively righteous.

On this subject, which has been fruitful of controversy, our remarks must be somewhat more extended.

The notion, that justification includes not only the pardon of sin, but the imputation to us of Christ's active personal righteousness, though usually held only by Calvinists, has not been received by all divines of this class; but, on the contrary, by some of them, both in ancient and modern times, it has been very strenuously opposed, as well as by the advocates of that more moderate scheme of election defended by Camero in France, and by Baxter in England. Even Calvin himself has said nothing on this subject, but which Arminius, in his Declaration before the States of Holland, declares his readiness to subscribe to; and Mr. Wesley, in much the same view of the subject as Arminius, admits the doctrine of the imputation of the righteousness of Christ to us upon our believing, provided it be soberly interpreted.

There are, in fact, three opinions on this subject, which it is necessary to distinguish in order to obtain clear views of the controversy.

The first is a part of the high Calvinistic scheme, and lays at the foundation of Antinomianism, and is, in consequence, violently advocated

by those who adopt that gross corruption of Christian faith. It is, that Christ so represented the elect that his righteousness is imputed to us as ours; as if we ourselves had been what he was, that is, perfectly obedient to the law of God, and had done what he did as perfectly righteous.

The first objection to this opinion is, that it is nowhere stated in Scripture that Christ's personal righteousness is imputed to us. Not a text can be found which contains any enunciation of this doctrine; and those which are adduced, such as "the Lord our righteousness," and "Christ, who is made unto us righteousness," are obviously pressed into the service of this scheme by a paraphrastic interpretation, for which there is no authority in any other passages which speak of our redemption. But to these texts we shall return in the sequel.

2. The notion here attached to Christ's *representing* us is wholly gratuitous. In a limited sense it is true, that Christ represented us; that is, suffered in our stead, that we might not suffer; "but not absolutely as our delegate," says Baxter, justly; "our persons did not, in a law sense, do in and by Christ what he did, or possess the habits which he possessed, or suffer what he suffered." (*Gospel Defended.*) The Scripture doctrine is, indeed, just the contrary. It is never said, that we suffered in Christ, but that he suffered for us; so also it is never taught that we obeyed in Christ, but that, through his entire obedience to a course of subjection and suffering, ending in his death, our disobedience is forgiven.

3. Nor is there any weight in the argument, that as our sins were accounted his, so his righteousness is accounted ours. Our sins were never so accounted Christ's as that he did them, and so justly suffered for them. This is a monstrous notion, which has been sometimes pushed to the verge of blasphemy. Our transgressions are never said to have been imputed to him in the *fact*, but only that they were laid upon him in the *penalty*. To be God's "beloved Son in whom he was always well pleased," and to be reckoned, imputed, accounted a sinner, *de facto*, are manifest contradictions.

4. This whole doctrine of the imputation of Christ's personal moral obedience to believers, as their own personal moral obedience, involves a fiction and impossibility inconsistent with the Divine attributes. "The judgment of the all-wise God is always according to truth; neither can it ever consist with his unerring wisdom to think that I am innocent, to judge that I am righteous or holy, because another is so. He can no more confound me with Christ than with David or Abraham." (*Wesley.*) But a contradiction is involved in another view. If what our Lord was and did is to be accounted to us in the sense just given, then we must be accounted never to have sinned, because Christ never sinned, and yet we must ask for pardon, though we are accounted from birth to death, to have fulfilled God's law in Christ; or if they should

say, that when we ask for pardon we ask only for a revelation to us of our eternal justification or pardon, the matter is not altered, for what need is there of pardon, in time or eternity, if we are accounted to have perfectly obeyed God's holy law; and why should we be accounted also to have suffered, in Christ, the penalty of sins which we are accounted never to have committed?

5. Another objection to the accounting of Christ's personal acts as done by us is, that they were of a loftier character than can be supposed capable of being accounted the acts of mere creatures; that, in one eminent instance, neither the act could be required of us, nor the imputation of the act to us; and, in other respects, and as to particular duties, Christ's personal obedience is deficient, and cannot be therefore reckoned to our account. For the first, Christ was God and man united in one person, a circumstance which gave a peculiar character of fulness and perfection to his obedience, which not even man, in his state of innocence, can be supposed capable of rendering. "He, then, that assumeth this righteousness to himself," says Goodwin, "and apparelleth himself with it, represents himself before God, not in the habit of a just or righteous man, but in the glorious attire of the great Mediator of the world, whose righteousness hath heights and depths in it, a length and breadth which infinitely exceed the proportions of all men whatever. Now, then, for a silly worm to take this robe of immeasurable majesty upon him, and to conceit himself as great in holiness and righteousness as Jesus Christ, (for that is the spirit that rules in this opinion, to teach men to assume all that Christ did unto themselves, and that in no other way, nor upon any lower terms, than as if themselves had personally done it,) whether this be right, I leave to sober men to consider." (*Treatise on Justification.*) For the second, I refer to our Lord's baptism by John. His submission to this ordinance was a part of his personal righteousness, and it is strongly marked as such in his own words addressed to John, "Suffer it to be so now, for thus it becometh us to fulfil *all righteousness*." But no man now is bound to submit to the baptism of John, and the righteousness of doing so, whether personally or by imputation, is superfluous. This may also be applied to many other of the acts of Christ; they were never obligatory upon us, and their imputation to us is impossible or unnecessary. For the third case, the personal obedience of Christ is, as to particular acts, deficient, and our condition could not, therefore, be provided for by this imputation. Suppose us guilty of violating the paternal or the conjugal duties, the duties of servants, or of magistrates, with many others, this theory is, that we are justified by the imputation of Christ's personal acts of righteousness to us, and that they are reckoned to us, as though we had ourselves performed them. But our Lord, never having stood in any of these relations, never acquired a personal righteousness of this kind

to be reckoned as done by us. That which never was done by Christ cannot be imputed, and so it would follow that we can never be forgiven such delinquencies. If it be said, that the imputation of particular acts is not necessary, but that it is sufficient if men have a righteousness imputed to them, which is equivalent to them, it is answered, the strict and peremptory nature of law knows nothing of this doctrine of the equivalency of one act to another. The suffering of an unobliged substitute, where such a provision is admitted, may be an equivalent to the suffering of the offender; but one course of duties cannot be accepted in the place of another when justification is placed on the ground of the actual fulfilment of the law by a delegate in the place of the delinquent, which is the ground on which the doctrine of the imputation of Christ's active righteousness for justification places it. The law must exact conformity to all its precepts in their place and order, and he that "offends in one is guilty of all."

6. A crowning and most fatal objection is, that this doctrine shifts the meritorious cause of man's justification from Christ's "obedience unto death," where the Scriptures place it, to Christ's active obedience to the precepts of the law; and leaves no rational account of the reason of Christ's vicarious sufferings. To his "blood" the New Testament writers ascribe our redemption, and "faith in his blood" is as clearly held out as the instrumental cause of our justification; but by this doctrine the attention and hope of men are perversely turned away from his sacrificial death to his holy life, which, though necessary, both as an example to us, and also so to qualify his sacrifice, that his blood should be that of "a lamb without spot," is nowhere represented as that on account of which men are pardoned.

Piscator, though a Calvinist, thus treats the subject in scholastic form. "If our sins have been expiated by the obedience of the life of Christ, either a *perfect* expiation has been thus made for all of them, or an *imperfect* one for some of them. The first cannot be asserted, for then it would follow that Christ had died in vain; for as he died to expiate our sins, he would not have accounted it necessary to offer such an expiation for them, if they had been already expiated by the obedience of his *life*. And the latter cannot be maintained, because Christ has yielded *perfect* obedience to the law of God, wherefore, if he have performed that for the expiation of our sins, he must necessarily, through that obedience, have expiated all of them *perfectly*." Again, "If Christ, by the obedience of his *life*, had rendered satisfaction to God for our sins, it would follow, as a consequence, that God is unjust, who has made an additional demand to receive satisfaction through the obedience of *death*, and thus required to have the same debt paid twice." Again, "If Christ, by his obedience to the law, has merited for us the forgiveness of sins, the consequence will be, that the remission of sins was

effected without the shedding of blood; but without shedding of blood no remission is effected, as appears from Heb. ix, 22; therefore Christ has not merited for us the remission of sins by the obedience which he performed to the law." (7) To the same effect, also, is a passage in Goodwin's Treatise on Justification, written while he was yet a Calvinist. "If men be as righteous as Christ was in his life, there was no more necessity of his death for them, than there was either of his own death, or the death of any other, for himself. If we were perfectly just or righteous in him, or with him, in his life, then the just would not have died for the unjust, but he would have died for the just, for whom there was no necessity he should die. This reason the apostle expressly delivers, Gal. ii, 21, 'If righteousness be by the law, then Christ died in vain.' I desire the impartial reader to observe narrowly the force of this inference made by the Holy Ghost. If righteousness, or justification, be by the law, then Christ died in vain. Men cannot here betake themselves to their wonted refuge, to say, that by the law, is to be understood the works of the law as performed by a man's self in person. For if by the word law in this place, we understand the works of the law as performed by Christ, the consequence will rise up with the greater strength against them. If righteousness were by the works of the law, as performed by Christ, that is, if the *imputation* of them were our complete righteousness, the death of Christ for us had been in vain, because the righteousness of his life imputed, had been a sufficient and complete righteousness for us."

The same writer, also, powerfully argues against the same doctrine from its confounding the two covenants of works and grace. "It is true, many that hold the way of imputation are nothing ashamed of this consequent, the confounding the two covenants of God with men, that of works with that of grace. These conceive that God never made more covenants than one with man; and that the Gospel is nothing else but a gracious aid from God to help man to perform the covenant of works: so that the life and salvation which are said to come by Christ, in no other sense come by him, but as he fulfilled that law of works for man which men themselves were not able to fulfil: and by *imputation*, as by a deed of gift, he makes over his perfect obedience and fulfilling of the law to those that believe; so that they, in right of this perfect obedience, made theirs by *imputation*, come to inherit life and salvation, according to the strict tenor of the covenant of works—'Do this and live.'

"But men may as well say, there was no second Adam, really differing from the first; or that the spirit of bondage is the same with the Spirit of adoption. If the second covenant of grace were implicitly contained in the first, then the meaning of the first covenant, conceived

(7) See note in Nichol's translation of the works of Arminius, vol. i, p. 634.

in these words, 'Do this and live,' must be, do this, either by thyself, or by another, and live. There is no other way to reduce them to the same covenant.

"Now, if the first and second covenant were in substance the same, then must the conditions in both be the same. For the conditions in a covenant are as essential a part of it as any other belonging to it. Though there be the same parties covenanting, and the same things covenanted for; yet if there be new articles of agreement, it is really another covenant. Now if the conditions be the same in both those covenants, then to *do this*, and to *believe*, faith and works, are the same; whereas the Scripture, from place to place, makes the most irreconcilable opposition between them. But some, being shy of this consequence, hold the *imputation* of Christ's righteousness (in the sense opposed) and so stand upon an identity of the two covenants. Wherefore, to prove it, I thus reason: Where the parties covenanting are the same, and the things covenanted for the same, and the conditions the same, there the covenants are the same. But if the righteousness of the law imputed to us, be the condition of the new covenant, all the three, persons, things, conditions, are the same. Therefore the two covenants, first and second, the old and the new, are the same; because as to the parties covenanting, and the things covenanted for, it is agreed, on both sides, they are the same.

"If it be objected, that the righteousness of the law imputed from another, and wrought by a man's self, are two different conditions; and that therefore, it doth not follow, that the covenants are the same: to this I answer, the substance of the agreement will be found the same notwithstanding; the works, or righteousness of the law are the same, by whomsoever wrought. If Adam had fulfilled the law, as Christ did, he had been justified by the same righteousness, wherewith Christ himself was righteous. If it be said, that *imputation* in the second covenant, which was not in the first, makes a difference in the condition; I answer, 1. Imputation of works, or of righteousness, is not the condition of the new covenant, but believing. If *imputation* were the condition, then the whole covenant would lie upon God, and nothing be required of the covenanter's part; for *imputation* is an act of God, not of men. 2. Though it were granted, that the righteousness, or the works of the law imputed to Christ, were that whereby we are justified, yet they must be considered as imputed, but as righteousness, or works of the law. So that *imputation* makes no difference in this respect. *Imputation* [illegible] of that righteousness by which we are justified, because [illegible] conformity with any law, nor with any part or branch of any [illegible] was ever bound to keep. Therefore it can be no part of [illegible] by which he is justified. So that the condition of [illegible] will be found the same, (and consequently both cove-

nants the same,) if justification be maintained by the righteousness of Christ imputed."

To the work last quoted the reader may be referred as a complete treatise on the subject, and a most masterly refutation of a notion, which he and other Calvinistic divines, in different ages, could not fail to perceive was most delusive to the souls of men, directly destructive of moral obedience, and not less so of the Christian doctrine of the atonement of Christ, and justification by "faith in his blood." It is on this ground that men who turn the grace of God into licentiousness, contend, that being invested with the perfect righteousness of Christ, God cannot see any sin in them; and, indeed, upon their own principles, they reason conclusively. Justice has not to do with them, but with Christ; it demands perfect obedience, and Christ has rendered that perfect obedience for them, and what he did is always accounted as done by them. They are, therefore, under no real obligation of obedience; they can fear no penal consequences from disobedience; and a course of the most flagrant vice, may consist with an entire confidence in the indefeisible favour of God, with the profession of sonship and discipleship, and the hope of heaven. These notions many shamelessly avow; and they have been too much encouraged in their fatal creed, by those who have held the same system substantially, though they abhor the bold conclusions which the open Antinomian would draw from it.

The doctrine on which the above remarks have been made, is the first of the three opinions which have been held on the subject of the imputation of righteousness in our justification. The second is the opinion of Calvin himself, and those of his followers, who have not refined so much upon the scheme of their master as others, and with them many Arminians have also, in some respects, agreed; not that they have approved the terms in which this opinion is usually expressed; but because they have thought it, under a certain interpretation, right, and one which would allow them, for the sake of peace, to use either the phrase, "the imputation of the righteousness of Christ," or "the imputation of faith for righteousness," which latter they consider more Scriptural, and therefore interpret the former so as to be consistent with it.

The sentiments of Calvin on this subject may be collected from the following passages in the third book of his Institutes:—

"We simply explain justification to be an acceptance, by which God receives us into his favour and esteems us as righteous persons, and we say it consists in the remission of sins and the imputation of the righteousness of Christ." "He must certainly be destitute of a righteousness of his own, who is taught to seek it out of himself. This is most clearly asserted by the apostle when he says, 'He hath made him to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteous-

ness of God in him.' We see that our righteousness is not in ourselves but in Christ. 'As by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.' What is placing our righteousness in the obedience of Christ, but asserting that we are accounted righteous only because his obedience is accepted for us as if it were our own?"

In these passages, the wording of which seems at first sight to favour the opinion above refuted, there is, however, this marked difference, that there is no separation made between the active and passive righteousness of Christ, his obedience to the precepts of the moral law, and his obedience to its penalty; so that one is imputed in our justification for one purpose, and the other for another; one to take the place of our obligation to obey, the other of our obligation to suffer; but the obedience of Christ is considered as *one*, as his holy life and sacrificial death considered together, and forming that righteousness of Christ which, being imputed to us, we are "reputed righteous before God, and not of ourselves." This is farther confirmed by the strenuous manner in which Calvin proves, that justification is simply the remission, or non-imputation of sin, "Whom, therefore, the Lord receives into fellowship with him, him he is said to justify, because he cannot receive any one into fellowship with himself without making him from a sinner to be a righteous person. This is accomplished by the remission of sins. For if they whom the Lord hath reconciled to himself be judged according to their works, they will still be found actually sinners, who, notwithstanding, must be absolved and free from sin. It appears, then, that those whom God receives, are made righteous no otherwise than as they are purified by being cleansed from all their defilements by the remission of sins; so that such a righteousness may, in one word, be denominated a remission of sins. Both these points are fully established by the language of Paul, which I have already cited. 'God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed to us the word of reconciliation.' Then he adds, 'He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.' The terms righteousness and reconciliation are here used by St. Paul indiscriminately, to teach us that they are mutually comprehended in each other. And he states the manner of obtaining this righteousness to consist in our transgressions not being imputed to us; wherefore we can no longer doubt how God justifies, when we hear that he reconciles us to himself by not imputing our sins to us." "So Paul, in preaching at Antioch, says, 'Through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins, and by him all that believe are justified.' The apostle thus connects 'forgiveness of sins' with 'justification,' to show that they are identically the same." (*Institutes*, lib. 3, cap. xi.)

This simple notion of justification as the remission of sins, could not have been maintained by Calvin had he held the notion of a distinct imputation of Christ's active righteousness; for it has always followed from that notion, that they who have held it represent justification as consisting of two parts, first, the forgiveness of sins, and then the imputation of Christ's moral obedience, so that he who is forgiven may be considered personally righteous, and thus, when both meet, he is justified. (8)

The view taken by Calvin of the imputation of Christ's righteousness in justification, is obviously, that the righteousness of Christ, that is, his entire obedience to the will of his Father both in doing and suffering, is, as he says, "accepted for us, as though it were our own;" so that, in virtue of it upon our believing, we are accounted righteous, not personally, but by the remission, or non-imputation of our sins. Thus, he observes on Acts xiii, 38, 39, "The justification which we have by Christ in the Gospel, is not a justification *with righteousness*, properly so called, but a justification from sin, and from the guilt of sin and condemnation due to it. So when Christ said to men and women in the Gospel, 'Thy sins are forgiven thee,' then he justified them—the forgiveness of their sins was their justification."

Calvin, however, like many of his followers, who adopt no views on this subject substantially different from their master, uses figurative terms and phrases, which somewhat obscure his real meaning, and give much countenance to the Antinomian doctrine; but then, so little, it has been thought, can be objected to the opinion of Calvin, in the article of imputed righteousness, in the main, that many divines, opposed to the Calvinian theory generally, have not hesitated, in substance, to assent to it, reserving to themselves some liberty in the use of the terms in which it is often enveloped, either to modify, explain, or reject them.

Thus Arminius:—"I believe that sinners are accounted righteous solely by the obedience of Christ; and that the righteousness of Christ is the only meritorious cause on account of which God pardons the sins of believers, and reckons them as righteous as if they had perfectly fulfilled the law. But since God imputes the righteousness of Christ to none except believers, I conclude, that, in this sense, it may be well and properly said, to a man who believes, faith is imputed for righteousness, through grace, because God hath set forth his Son Jesus Christ to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood. Whatever interpretation may be put upon these expressions, none of our divines blame Calvin, or consider him to be heterodox on this point; yet my opinion is not so widely different from his, as to prevent me employing the signature of my own

(8) "To be released from the damnatory sentence is one thing, to be treated as a righteous person, is evidently another." (*Hervey's Theron and Aspasio.*)

hand in subscribing to those things which he has delivered on this subject, in the third book of his Institutes." (*Nichol's Arminius.*)

So also Mr. Wesley, in his sermon, entitled, "The Lord our Righteousness," almost repeats Arminius's words; but though these eminent divines seem to agree substantially with Calvin, it is clear that, in their interpretation of the phrase, the "imputed righteousness of Christ," he would not entirely follow them. "As the active and passive righteousness of Christ were never in fact separated from each other, so we never need separate them at all. It is with regard to both these conjointly, that Jesus is called 'the Lord our righteousness.' But when is this righteousness imputed? When they believe. In that very hour the righteousness of Christ is theirs. It is imputed to every one that believes, as soon as he believes. But in what sense is this righteousness imputed to believers? In this; all believers are forgiven and accepted, not for the sake of any thing in them, or of any thing that ever was, that is, or ever can be done by them, but wholly for the sake of what Christ hath done and suffered for them. But perhaps some will affirm, that faith is imputed to us for righteousness. St. Paul affirms this, therefore I affirm it too. Faith is imputed for righteousness to every believer, namely, faith in the righteousness of Christ; but this is exactly the same thing which has been said before; for by that expression I mean neither more nor less than that we are justified by faith, not by works, or that every believer is forgiven and accepted, merely for the sake of what Christ had done and suffered." (*Sermons.*)

In this sermon, which is one of peace, one in which he shows how near he was willing to approach those who held the doctrine of Calvin on this subject, the author justly observes, that the terms themselves, in which it is often expressed, are liable to abuse, and intimates, that they had better be dispensed with. This every one must feel; for it is clear that such figurative expressions, as being clothed with the righteousness of Christ, and appearing before God as invested in it, so that no fault can be laid to our charge, are modes of speech, which, though used by Calvin and his followers of the moderate school, and by some evangelical Arminians, who mainly agree with them on the subject of man's justification, are much more appropriate to the doctrine of the imputation of Christ's active righteousness, as held by the higher Calvinists, and by Antinomians, than to any other. The truth of the case is, that the imputation of Christ's righteousness is held by such Calvinists in a *proper* sense, by evangelical Arminians in an *improper* or accommodated sense; and that Calvin and his real followers, though nearer to the latter than the former, do not fully agree with either. If the same phrases, therefore, be used, they are certainly understood in different senses, or, by one party at least, with limitations; and if it can be shown, that neither is the "imputation of Christ's righteousness," in any

good sense expressed or implied in Scripture, and that the phrases, being clothed and invested with his righteousness, are not used with any reference to justification, it seems preferable, at least when we are investigating truth, to discard them at once, and fully to bring out the testimony of Scripture on the doctrine of imputation.

The question then will be, not whether the imputation of Christ's righteousness is to be taken in the sense of the Antinomians, which has been sufficiently refuted; but whether there is any Scripture authority for the imputation of Christ's righteousness as it is understood by Calvin, and admitted, though with some hesitancy, and with explanations, by Arminius and some others.

With Calvin the notion of imputation seems to be, that the righteousness of Christ, that is, his entire obedience to the will of his Father, both in doing and suffering, is, upon our believing, imputed, or accounted to us, or accepted for us, "as though it were OUR OWN." From which we may conclude, that he admitted some kind of transfer of the righteousness of Christ to our account, and that believers are considered so to be in Christ, as that he should answer for them in law, and plead his righteousness in default of theirs. All this, we grant, is capable of being interpreted to a good and Scriptural sense; but it is also capable of a contrary one. The opinion of some professedly Calvinistic divines; of Baxter and his followers; and of the majority of evangelical Arminians, is, as Baxter well expresses it, that Christ's righteousness is imputed to us in the sense "of its being accounted of God the valuable consideration, satisfaction, and merit, (attaining God's ends,) for which we are (when we consent to the covenant of grace) forgiven and justified, against the condemning sentence of the law of innocency, and accounted and accepted of God to grace and glory." (*Breviate of Controversies.*) So also Goodwin: "If we take the phrase of imputing Christ's righteousness improperly, viz. for the bestowing, as it were, of the righteousness of Christ, including his obedience, as well passive as active, in *the return of it, i. e.* in the privileges, blessings, and benefits purchased by it, so a believer may be said to be justified by the righteousness of Christ imputed. But then the meaning can be no more than this: God justifies a believer for the sake of Christ's righteousness, and not for any righteousness of his own. Such an imputation of the righteousness of Christ as this, is no way denied or questioned." (*On Justification.*)

Between these opinions, as to the imputation of the righteousness of Christ it will be seen, that there is a manifest difference, which difference arises from the different senses in which the term imputation is taken. The latter takes it in the sense of accounting or allowing to the believer the benefit of the righteousness of Christ, the other in the sense of reckoning or accounting the righteousness of Christ as ours; that is, what he did and suffered is regarded as done and suffered by us. "It

is accepted," says Calvin, "as though it were our own;" so that though Calvin does not divide the active and passive obedience of Christ, nor make justification any thing more than the remission of sin, yet his opinion easily slides into the Antinomian notion, and lays itself open to several of the same objections, and especially to this, that it involves the same kind of fiction, that what Christ did or suffered, is, in any sense whatever, considered by him who knows all things as they are, as being done or suffered by any other person, than by him who did or suffered it in fact.

For this notion, that the righteousness of Christ is so imputed as to be accounted our own, there is no warrant in the word of God; and a slight examination of those passages, which are indifferently adduced to support either the Antinomian or the Calvinistic view of the subject, will suffice to demonstrate this.

Psalm xxxii, 1: "Blessed is the man whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered." The covering of sin here spoken of, is by some considered to be the investment of the sinner with the righteousness or obedience of Christ. But this is entirely gratuitous, for the forgiveness of sin, even by the legal atonements, is called, according to the Hebrew idiom, (though another verb is used,) to cover sin; and the latter part of the sentence is clearly a parallelism to the former. This is the interpretation of Luther and of Calvin himself. To forgive sin, to cover sin, and not to impute sin, are in this psalm all phrases obviously of the same import, and no other kind of imputation but the non-imputation of sin is mentioned in it. And, indeed, the passage will not serve the purpose of the advocates of the doctrine of the imputation of Christ's active righteousness, on their own principles; for sin cannot be covered by the imputation of Christ's active righteousness, since they hold that it is taken away by the imputation of his death, and that the office of Christ's active righteousness is not to take away sin; but to render us personally and positively holy by imputation and the fiction of a transfer.

Jer. xxiii, 6, and xxxiii, 16: "And this is the name whereby he shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness." This passage also proves nothing to the point, for it is neither said that the righteousness of the Lord shall be our righteousness, nor that it shall be imputed to us for righteousness, but simply, that the name by which he shall be called, or acknowledged, shall be the Lord our Righteousness, that is, the Author and Procurer of our righteousness or justification before God. So he is said to be "the Resurrection," "our Life," "our Peace," &c, as the author of these blessings; for who ever dreamt that Christ is the life, the resurrection, the peace of his people by imputation? or that we live by being accounted to live in him, or are raised from the dead by being accounted to have risen in him?

"Some," says Goodwin, "have digged for the treasure of imputation

in Isaiah xlv, 24, 'Surely shall one say, in the Lord have I righteousness and strength.' But, first, neither is there here the least breathing of that imputation so much wandered after, nor do I find any intimation given of any such business by any sound expositor. Secondly, the plain and direct meaning of the place is, that when God should communicate the knowledge of himself, in his Son, to the world, his people should have this sense of the means of their salvation and peace, that they receive them of the free grace of God, and not of themselves, or by the merit of their own righteousness. And Calvin's exposition is to this effect:—'Because righteousness and strength are the two main points of our salvation, the faithful acknowledge God to be the author of both.'"

With respect to all those passages which speak of the Jewish or Christian Churches, or their individual members being "clothed with garments of salvation," "robes of righteousness," "white linen, the righteousness of the saints," or of "putting on Christ;" a class of texts on which, from their mere sound, the advocates of imputed righteousness ring so many changes, the use which is thus made of them shows either great inattention to the context, or great ignorance of the principles of criticism:—the former, because the context will show that either those passages relate to temporal deliverances, and external blessings; or else, not to justification, but to habitual and practical sanctification, and to the honours and rewards of the saints in glory:—the latter, because nothing is more common in language than to represent good or evil *habits* by clean or filthy, by soiled or resplendent vestments, by nakedness or by clothing; and this is especially the case in the Hebrew language, because it was the custom of the Jews, by changing their garments to express the changes in their condition. They put on sackcloth, or laid aside their upper robe, (which is, in Scripture style, called making themselves naked,) or rent their garments, when personal or national afflictions came upon them; and they arrayed themselves in white and adorned apparel, in seasons of festivity, and after great deliverances. In all these figurative expressions there is, however, nothing which countenances the notion that Christ's righteousness is a robe thrown upon sinful men, to hide from the eye of justice their natural squalidness and pollution, and to give them confidence in the presence of God. No interpretation can be more fanciful and unfounded.

Romans iii, 21, 22, "But now the righteousness of God, without the law, is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets, even the righteousness of God which is by the faith of Jesus Christ." The righteousness of God here is, by some, taken to signify the righteousness of Christ imputed to them that believe. But the very text makes it evident, that by "the righteousness of God," the righteousness of the Father is meant, for he is distinguished from "Jesus Christ," mentioned immediately afterward; and by the righteousness of God, it is also

plain, that his rectoral justice in the administration of pardon, is meant, which, of course, is not thought capable of imputation. This is made idubitable by the verse which follows, "to declare at this time his *righteousness*, that he might be *just* and the *justifier* of him that believeth on Jesus."

The phrase, the righteousness of God, in this and several other passages in St. Paul's writings, obviously means God's righteous method of justifying sinners through the atonement of Christ, and instrumentally, by faith. This is the grand peculiarity of the Gospel scheme, the fulness at once of its love and its wisdom, that "the righteousness of God is manifested without law;" and that without either an enforcement of the penalty of the violated law upon the personal offender; which would have cut him off from hope; or without making his justification to depend upon works of obedience to the law, (which was the only method of justification admitted by the Jews of St. Paul's day,) and which obedience was impossible, and therefore hopeless; he can yet, in perfect consistency with his justice and righteous administration, offer pardon to the guilty. No wonder, therefore, that the apostle, who discourses professedly on this subject, should lay so great a stress upon it, and that his mind, always full of a subject so great and glorious, should so often advert to it incidentally, as well as in his regular discourses on the justification of man in the sight of God. Thus he gives it as a reason why he was not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, that "therein is the *righteousness of* God revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, the just shall live by faith," Rom. i, 17. Thus, again, in contrasting God's method of justifying the *ungodly* with the error of the Jews, by whom justification was held to be the acquittal of the *righteous* or *obedient*, he says, "for they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves to the *righteousness of* God," Rom. x, 3. The same contrast we have in Phil. iii, 9, "Not having mine own righteousness which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Jesus Christ, *the righteousness which is of God by faith.*" In all these passages the righteousness of God manifestly signifies, his righteous method of justifying them that believe in Christ. No reference at all is made to the imputation of Christ's righteousness to such persons, and much less is any distinction set up between his active and passive righteousness.

1 Cor. i, 30, "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption." Here, also, to say that Christ is "made unto us righteousness," by imputation, is to invent and not to interpret. This is clear, that he is made unto us righteousness only as he is made unto us "redemption," so that if we are not redeemed by imputation, we are not justified by imputation. The meaning of the apostle is, that Christ is made to us,

by the appointment of God, the sole means of instruction, justification, sanctification, and eternal life.

2 Cor. v, 21, "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." To be made sin, we have already shown, signifies to be made an offering for sin; consequently, as no imputation of our sins to Christ is here mentioned, there is no foundation for the notion, that there is a reciprocal imputation of Christ's righteousness to us. The text is wholly silent on this subject, for it is wholly gratuitous to say, that we are made the righteousness of God in or through Christ, by imputation or reckoning to us what he did or suffered as our acts or sufferings. The passages we have already adduced will explain the phrase, "the righteousness of God" in this place. This righteousness, with respect to our pardon, is God's righteous method of justifying, through the atonement of Christ, and our being made or becoming this righteousness of God in or by Christ, is our becoming righteous persons through the pardon of our sins in this peculiar method, by renouncing our own righteousness, and by "submitting to this righteousness of God."

Rom. v, 18, 19, "As by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." That this passage, though generally depended upon in this controversy, as the most decisive in its evidence in favour of the doctrine of imputation, proves nothing to the purpose may be thus demonstrated. It proves nothing in favour of the imputation of Christ's active righteousness. For,

1. Here is nothing said of the active obedience of Christ, as distinguished from his obedient suffering, and which might lead us to attribute the free gift of justification to the former, rather than to the latter.

2. If the apostle is supposed to speak here of the active obedience of Christ, as distinguished from his sufferings, his death is of course excluded from the work of justification. But this cannot be allowed, because the apostle has intimated, in the same chapter, that we are "justified by his blood," Rom. v, 9, and, therefore, it cannot be allowed that he is speaking of the active obedience of Christ, as distinguished from his passive.

3. As the apostle has unequivocally decided, that we are justified by the blood of Christ, or, in other words, "that we are justified through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth a propitiation, through faith in his blood," (a thing which the doctrine under examination supposes to be impossible,) there is reason to conclude that he speaks here of his passive, rather than of his active obedience. "If, indeed, his willingness to suffer for our sins were never

spoken of as an act of obedience, such an observation might have the appearance of a mere expedient to get rid of a difficulty. But if, on the other hand, this should prove to be the very spirit and letter of Scripture, the justness of it will be obvious. Hear, then, our Lord himself on this subject. 'Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself: I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This *commandment* have I received of my Father,' John x, 17, 18. This, then, was the commandment to which he rendered willing obedience, when he said, 'O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done,' Matt. xxvi, 42. 'The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?' John xviii, 11. In conformity with this, the apostle applies to him the following words: 'Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not, but a body hast thou prepared me. Then said I, Lo I come to do thy will, O God. By (his performance of) which will we are sanctified; through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all,' Heb. x, 5, 10. 'Being found in fashion as a man, (says St. Paul,) he became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross,' Phil. ii, 8. Such was his obedience, an obedience unto the death of the cross. And by this his obedience unto the death of the cross, shall many be constituted righteous, or be justified. Where, then, is the imputation of his active obedience for justification?" (*Hare on Justification.*)

It proves nothing in favour of the imputation of Christ's righteousness considered as one, and including what he did and suffered, in the sense of its being reputed our righteousness, by transfer or by fiction of law. For though the imputation of Adam's sin to his posterity is supposed to be taught in this chapter, and the imputation of Christ's obedience in one or other of the senses above given, is argued from this particular text, the examination of the subject will show that the right understanding of the imputation of Adam's sin wholly overthrows both the Antinomian and Calvinistic view of the imputation of Christ's righteousness. This argument is very ably developed by Goodwin. (*Treatise on Justification.*)

"Because the *imputation* of Adam's sin to his posterity, is frequently produced to prove the *imputation of Christ's righteousness;* I shall lay down, with as much plainness as I can, in what sense the Scriptures countenance that imputation. The Scriptures own no other imputation of Adam's sin to his posterity, than of Christ's righteousness to those that believe. The righteousness of Christ is *imputed*, or given to those that *believe*, not in the letter or formality of it, but in blessings, privileges, and benefits purchased of God by the *merit* of it. So the sin of Adam is *imputed* to his posterity, not in the letter and formality of it,

(which is the imputation commonly urged,) but in the demerit of it, that is, in the curse or punishment due to it. Therefore, as concerning this imputation of Adam's sin, I answer,

"First, the Scripture nowhere affirms, either the imputation of Adam's sin to his posterity, or of the righteousness of Christ to those that believe; neither is such a manner of speaking any ways agreeable to the language of the Holy Ghost: for in the Scriptures, wheresoever the term IMPUTING is used, it is only applied to, or spoken of something of the same persons, to whom the imputation is said to be made, and never, to my remembrance, to, or of any thing of another's. So, Rom. iv, 3, 'Abraham believed God, and it was IMPUTED to him for righteousness,' that is, his own believing was *imputed* to him, not another man's. So, verse 5, but 'to him that worketh not, but believeth, his faith is IMPUTED to him for righteousness.' So, Psalm cvi, 30, 31, 'Phineas stood up and executed judgment, and that' (act of his) 'was IMPUTED to him for righteousness,' that is, received a testimony from God of being a righteous act. So again, 2 Cor. v, 19, 'not IMPUTING their trespasses,' (their own trespasses,) 'unto them.'

"Secondly, When a thing is said simply to be *imputed*, as sin, folly, and so *righteousness*, the phrase is not to be taken concerning the bare acts of the things, as if (for example) to impute sin to a man, signified this, to repute the man, (to whom sin is *imputed*,) to have committed a sinful act, or, as if to *impute* folly, were simply to charge a man to have done foolishly: but when it is applied to things that are evil, and attributed to persons that have power over those, to whom the imputation is made, it signifieth, the charging the guilt of what is imputed upon the head of the person to whom the imputation is made, with an intent of inflicting some condign punishment upon him. So that to impute sin (in Scripture phrase) is to charge the guilt of sin upon a man with a purpose to punish him for it. Thus Rom. v, 13, sin is said, 'not to be IMPUTED where there is no law.' The meaning cannot be, that the act which a man doth, whether there be a law or no law, should not be imputed to him. The law doth not make any act to be imputed, or ascribed to a man, which might not as well have been imputed without it. But the meaning is, that there is no guilt charged by God upon men, nor any punishment inflicted for any thing done by them, but only by virtue of the law prohibiting. In which respect the law is said to be *the strength of sin*, because it gives a condemning power against the doer, to that which otherwise would have had none, 1 Cor. xv, 56 So again, Job xxiv, 12, when it is said, 'God doth not lay folly to the charge of them, (*i. e. impute* folly to them,) that make the souls of the slain to cry out,' the meaning is, not that God doth not repute them to have committed the acts of oppression, or murder. For supposing they did such things, it is impossible but God should repute them to have done

them: but that God doth not visibly charge the guilt of those sins upon them, or inflict punishment for them. So, 2 Sam. xix, 19, when Shimei prayeth David not to IMPUTE *wickedness unto him*, his meaning is, not to desire David not to think he had done wickedly in railing upon him, (for himself confesseth this in the very next words,) but not to inflict the punishment which that wickedness deserved. So when David himself pronounceth the man *blessed to whom the Lord* IMPUTETH *not sin*, his meaning is, not that there is any man, whom the Lord would not repute to have committed those acts of sin, which he has committed; but that such are blessed on whom God will not charge the demerit of their sin in the punishment due to them. So yet again, (to forbear farther citations,) 2 Cor. v, 19, when God is said, 'not to IMPUTE their sins unto men,' the meaning is, not that God should not repute men to have committed such and such sins against him; but that he freely discharged them from the punishment due to them. By all which testimonies from Scripture, concerning the constant use of the term *imputing*, or *imputation*, it is evident that proposition, 'that the transgression of the law is imputable from one person to another,' hath no foundation in Scripture.

"And, therefore, thirdly and lastly, to come home to the *imputation of Adam's sin to his posterity*, I answer,

"First, that either to say that the righteousness of Christ is imputed to his posterity (of believers) or the sin of Adam to his, are both expressions, at least, unknown to the Holy Ghost in the Scriptures. There is neither word, nor syllable, nor letter, nor tittle of any such thing to be found there. But that the *faith* of him that *believeth*, is *imputed for righteousness*, are words which the Holy Ghost useth.

"But, secondly, because I would make no exceptions against words, farther than necessity enforceth, I grant, there are expressions in Scripture concerning both the communication of Adam's sin with his posterity, and the *righteousness* of Christ with those that *believe*, that will fairly enough bear the term of *imputation*, if it be rightly understood, and according to the use of it in Scripture upon other occasions. But as it is commonly taken and understood by many, it occasions much error and mistake.

"Concerning Adam's sin or disobedience, *many* are said to be '*made sinners by it*,' Rom. v, 19. And so 'by the obedience of Christ,' it is said (in the same place) 'that many shall be made righteous.' But if men will exchange language with the Holy Ghost, they must see that they make him no loser. If, when they say, 'Adam's sin is imputed to all unto condemnation,' their meaning be the same with the Holy Ghost's, when he saith, 'that by the disobedience of one, many were made sinners,' there is no harm done: but it is evident by what many speak, that the Holy Ghost and they are not of one mind, touching the imputation or communication of Adam's sin with his posterity, but that

they differ as much in meaning, as in words. If when they say, 'Adam's sin is imputed to all unto condemnation,' their meaning be this, that the guilt of Adam's sin is charged upon his whole posterity, or that the punishment of Adam's sin redounded from his person to his whole posterity, a main part of which punishment lieth in that original defilement wherein they are all conceived and born, and whereby they are made truly sinners before God; if this be the meaning of the term imputation, when applied to Adam's sin, let it pass. But if the meaning be, that that sinful act, wherein Adam transgressed when he ate the forbidden fruit, is, in the letter and formality of it, imputed to his posterity, so that by this imputation all his posterity are made formally sinners: this is an imputation which the Scripture will never justify."

The last text necessary to mention is Rom. iv, 6, "Even as David declareth the blessedness of the man to whom God *imputeth righteousness* without works." Here again the expositors of this class assume, even against the letter of the text and context, that the righteousness which God is said to impute is the righteousness of Christ. But Calvin himself may here be sufficient to answer them. "In the fourth chapter of the Romans the apostle first mentions an imputation of righteousness, and immediately represents it as consisting in remission of sins. David, says he, describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, saying, 'Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven,' &c. He there argues, not concerning a branch, but the whole of justification; he also adduces the definition of it given by David, when he pronounces those to be blessed who receive the free forgiveness of their sins, whence it appears that this righteousness is simply opposed to guilt." (*Institut.* lib. iii, cap. 11.) The imputation of righteousness in this passage is, in Calvin's view, therefore, the simple, non-imputation of sin, or, in other words, the remission of sins.

In none of these passages, is there, then, any thing found to countenance even that second view of imputation, which consists in the accounting the righteousness of Christ in justification to be our righteousness. It is only imputed in the benefit and effect of it, that is, in the blessings and privileges purchased by it; and though we may use the phrase, the imputed righteousness of Christ, in this latter sense, qualifying our meaning like Parœus, who says, "In this sense imputed righteousness is called the righteousness of Christ, by way of merit or effect, because it is procured for us by the merit of Christ, not because it is subjectively or inherently in Christ;" yet since this manner of speaking has no foundation in Scripture, and must generally lead to misapprehensions, it will be found more conducive to the cause of truth to confine ourselves to the language of the Scriptures. According to them, there is no fictitious accounting either of what Christ did or suffered, or of both united, to us, as being done and suffered by us, through our union with him, or through

his becoming our legal representative; but his active and passive ri eousness, advanced in dignity by the union of the Divine nature a perfection, is the true meritorious cause of our justification. It is t great whole which constitutes his "merits;" that is the considerati in view of which the offended but merciful Governor of the world, l determined it to be a just and righteous, as well as a merciful ma justify the ungodly; and, for the sake of this perfect obedience of Lord to the will of the Father, an obedience extending unto "de even the death of the cross," to every penitent sinner who believe him, but considered still in his own person as "ungodly," and meri nothing but punishment, "his faith is imputed for righteousness;" i followed by the remission of his sins and all the benefits of the eve gelical covenant.

This imputation of FAITH for righteousness is the third opinion wh we proposed to examine.

That this is the doctrine taught by the express letter of Scripture one can deny, and, as one well observes, "what that is which is impu for righteousness in justification, all the wisdom and learning of men not so fit or able to determine, as the Holy Ghost, speaking in Scri ture, he being the great secretary of heaven, and privy to all the co sels of GOD." "Abraham believed GOD and it was imputed unto h for righteousness," Rom. iv, 3. "To him that worketh not, but beli eth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted to him righteousness," verse 5. "We say that faith was imputed to him righteousness," verse 9. "Now it was not written for his sake alo that it was imputed to him, but for us to whom it shall be imputed, if believe in him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead," ver 22–24.

The testimony of the apostle, then, being so express on this point, imputation of faith for righteousness must be taken to be the doctrine the New Testament, unless, indeed, we admit, with the advocates of imputation of the righteousness of Christ, that faith is here used m nymically for the object of faith, that is, the righteousness of Ch The context of the above passages, however, is sufficient to refute t and makes it indubitable that the apostle uses the term faith in its pro and literal sense. In verse 5, he calls the faith of him that believ and which is imputed to him for righteousness, "HIS faith;" but in w sense could this be taken if St. Paul meant by "his faith," the ob of his faith, namely, the righteousness of Christ? And how could tha *his* before the imputation was made to him? Again, in verse 5, the f spoken of is opposed to *works:* "To him that *worketh* not, but *belie* on him that justifieth the ungodly, his *faith* is counted to him for ri eousness." Finally, in verse 22, the faith imputed to us is describe be our "believing in Him who raised up our Lord Jesus from the dea

so that the apostle has, by these explanations, rendered it impossible for us to understand him as meaning any thing else by faith, but the act of believing. To those who will, notwithstanding this evidence from the context, still insist upon understanding faith, in these passages, to mean the righteousness of Christ, Baxter bluntly observes, "If it be not faith indeed that the apostle meaneth, the context is so far from relieving our understandings, that it contributeth to our unavoidable deceit or ignorance. Read over the texts, and put but 'Christ's righteousness' every where instead of the word 'faith,' and see what a scandalous paraphrase you will make. The Scripture is not so audaciously to be corrected." Some farther observations will, however, be necessary for the clear apprehension of this doctrine.

We have already seen, in establishing the Christian doctrine of the atonement, that the law of God inflicts the penalty of death upon every act of disobedience, and that all men have come under that penalty. That men, having become totally corrupt, are not capable of obedience in future. That if they were, there is nothing in the nature of that future obedience to be a consideration for the forgiveness of past offences, under a righteous government. It follows, therefore, that, by moral obedience, or attempted and professed moral obedience, there can be no remission of sins, that is, no deliverance from the penalty of offences actually committed. This is the ground of the great argument of the Apostle Paul in his Epistle to the Romans. He proves both Jews and Gentiles under sin; that the whole world is guilty before God; and by consequence under his wrath, under condemnation, from which they could only be relieved by the Gospel.

In his argument with the Jews the subject is farther opened. They sought justification by "works of law." If we take "works" to mean obedience both to the moral and ceremonial law it makes no difference; for, as they had given up the typical character of their sacrifices, and their symbolical reference to the death of Messiah, the performance of their religious rites was no longer an expression of faith; it was brought down to the same principle as obedience to the moral law, a simple compliance with the *commands* of God. Their case, then, was this, they were sinners on conviction of their law, and by obedience to it they sought justification, ignorant both of its spiritual meaning and large extent, and unmindful, too, of this obvious principle, that no acts of obedience, even if perfect, could take away past transgression. The apostle's great axiom on this subject is, that "*by works of law, no man can be justified*," and the doctrine of justification, which he teaches, is the opposite of theirs. It is, that men are sinners; that they must confess themselves such, and join to this confession a true repentance. That justification is a gratuitous act of God's mercy, a procedure of pure "grace," not of "debt." That in order to the exercise of this grace, on the part

of God, Christ was set forth as a propitiation for sin; that his death, under this character, is a "demonstration of the righteousness of God" in the free and gratuitous remission of sins; and that this actual remission or justification, follows upon believing in Christ, because faith, under this gracious constitution and method of justification, is accounted to men for righteousness; in other words, that righteousness is imputed to them upon their believing, which imputation of righteousness is, as he teaches us, in the passages before quoted, the forgiveness of sins; for to have faith counted or imputed for righteousness is explained by David, in the psalm which the apostle quotes, (Rom. iv,) to have sin forgiven, covered, and not imputed. That this was no new doctrine, he shows also from the justification of Abraham. "Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness," Rom. iv, 3. "Know ye, therefore, that they which are of the faith, the same are the children of Abraham. And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the Gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. So these which are of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham," Gal. iii, 7–9.

On the one hand, therefore, it is the plain doctrine of Scripture that man is not, and never was in any age, justified by works of any kind, whether moral or ceremonial; on the other, that he is justified by the imputation and accounting of "faith for righteousness." On this point, until the Antinomian corruption began to infest the reformed Churches, the leading commentators, from the earliest ages, were very uniform and explicit. That when faith is said to be imputed to us for righteousness, the word is taken literally, "and not tropically, was," says Goodwin, "the common interpretation anciently received and followed by the principal lights of the Church of God; and for fifteen hundred years together (as far as my memory will assist me) was never questioned or contradicted. Neither did the contrary opinion ever look out into the world, till the last age. So that it is but a calumny brought upon it, (unworthy the tongue or pen of any sober man,) to make either Arminius or Socinus the author of it. And for this last hundred years and upward, from Luther's and Calvin's times, the stream of interpreters agrees therewith.

"Tertullian, who wrote about the year 194, in his fifth book against Marcion, says, 'But how the children of faith? or of whose faith, if not of Abraham's? For if Abraham believed God, and that was imputed unto him for righteousness, and he thereby deserved the name of a father of many nations, we, also, by believing God, are justified as Abraham was.' Therefore Tertullian's opinion directly is, that the faith which is said to be imputed to Abraham for righteousness, is faith properly taken, and not the righteousness of Christ apprehended by faith.

"Origen, who lived about the year 203, in his fourth book upon the

Romans, chap. iv, verse 3, says, 'It seems, therefore, that in this place also, whereas many faiths (that is, many acts of believing) of Abraham had gone before, now all his faith was collected and united together, and so was accounted unto him for righteousness.'

"Justin Martyr, who lived before them both, and not long after the Apostle John's time, about the year 130, in his disputation with Trypho the Jew, led them both to that interpretation. 'Abraham carried not away the testimony of righteousness, because of his circumcision, but because of his faith. For before he was circumcised, this was pronounced of him, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness.'

"Chrysostom, upon Gal. iii, says, 'For what was Abraham the worse for not being under the law? Nothing at all. For his faith was sufficient unto him for righteousness.' If Abraham's faith was sufficient unto him for righteousness, it must needs be imputed by God for righteousness unto him; for it is this imputation from God that must make that sufficiency of it unto Abraham. That which will not pass in account with God for righteousness, will never be sufficient for righteousness unto the creature.

"St. Augustine, who lived about the year 390, gives frequent testimony to this interpretation. Upon Psa. cxlviii, 'For we by believing have found that which they (the Jews) lost by not believing. For Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness.' Therefore his opinion clearly is, that it was Abraham's faith, or believing properly taken, that was imputed unto him for righteousness, and not the righteousness of Christ. For that faith of his, which was so imputed, he opposeth to the unbelief of the Jews, whereby they lost the grace and favour of God. Now the righteousness of Christ is not opposed to unbelief, but faith properly taken. Again, writing upon Psalm lxx, 'For I believe in him that justifieth the ungodly, that my faith may be imputed unto me for righteousness.' The same father yet again, in his tract of Nature and Grace: 'But if Christ died not in vain, the ungodly is justified in him alone: to whom, believing in him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness.'

"Primasius, about the year 500, writes upon Romans iv, verse 3, 'Abraham's faith by the gift of God was so great, that both his former sins were forgiven him, and this faith of his alone preferred in acceptation before all righteousness.'

"Bede, who lived somewhat before the year 700, upon Romans iv, verse 5, observes, 'What faith, but that which the apostle in another place fully defineth? neither circumcision, nor uncircumcision, availeth any thing, but faith which worketh by love; not any faith, but that faith which worketh by love.' Certainly that faith, which Paul defineth to be a faith working by love, cannot be conceived to be the righteousness of

Christ; and yet this faith it was, in the judgment of this author, that was imputed unto Abraham for righteousness.

"Haymo, about the year 840, on Rom. iv, 3, writes, 'Because he believed God, it was imputed unto him for righteousness, that is, unto remission of sins, because by that faith, wherewith he believed, he was made righteous.'

"Anselm, archbishop of Canterbury, about the year 1090, upon Rom. iv, 3, 'That he (meaning Abraham) believed so strongly, was by God imputed for righteousness unto him; that is, &c, by his believing he was imputed righteous before God.'

"From all these testimonies it is apparent, that the interpretation of this scripture which we contend for, anciently obtained in the Church of God, and no man was found to open his mouth against it, till it had been established for above a thousand years. Come we to the times of reformation; here we shall find it still maintained by men of the greatest authority and learning.

"Luther on Gal. iii, 6, 'Christian righteousness is an affiance or faith in the Son of God, which affiance is imputed unto righteousness for Christ's sake.' And in the same place, not long after, 'God for Christ's sake, in whom I have begun to believe, accounts this (my) imperfect faith, for perfect righteousness.'

"Bucer, upon Rom. iv, 3, 'Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness, that is, he accounted this faith for righteousness unto him. So that by believing he obtained this, that God esteemed him a righteous man.'

"Peter Martyr declares himself of the same judgment, upon Rom. iv, 3, 'To be imputed for righteousness in another sense, that by which we ourselves are reckoned in the number of the righteous. And this Paul attributes to faith only.'

"Calvin has the same interpretation upon Rom. iv, 3, 'Wherefore Abraham, by believing, doth only embrace the grace tendered unto him, that it might not be in vain. If this be imputed unto him for righteousness, it follows, that he is no otherwise righteous, but as trusting or relying upon the goodness of God, he hath boldness to hope for all things from him.' Again, upon verse 5, 'Faith is imputed for righteousness, not because it carrieth any merit from us, but because it apprehends the goodness of God.' Hence it appears, that he never thought of a tropical or metonymical sense in the word faith; but that he took it in the plain, ready, and grammatical signification.

"Musculus contends for this imputation, also, in his common place of justification, sect. 5, 'This faith should be in high esteem with us; not in regard of the proper quality of it, but in regard of the purpose of God, whereby he hath decreed, for Christ's sake, to impute it for righteousness unto those that believe in him.' The same author upon Gal. iii, 6

'What did Abraham that should be imputed unto him for righteousness, but only this, that he believed God?' Again, 'But when he firmly believed God promising, that very faith was imputed to him, in the place of righteousness, that is, he was of God reputed righteous for that faith, and absolved from all his sins.'

"Bullinger gives the same interpretation, upon Romans iv, 'Abraham committed himself unto God by believing, and this very thing was imputed unto him for righteousness." And so, upon Gal. iii, 6, 'It was imputed unto him for righteousness, that is, that very faith of Abraham was imputed to him for righteousness, while he was yet uncircumcised.'

"Gaulter comes behind none of the former, in avouching the grammatical against the rhetorical interpretation, upon Romans iv, 3, 'Abraham believed God, and he, viz. God, imputed unto him this faith for righteousness.'

"Illyricus forsakes not his fellow interpreters in this point, upon Romans iv, 3, 'That same believing was imputed unto him for righteousness.'

"Pellicanus, in like manner, says, upon Gen. xx, 6, 'Abraham simply believed the word of God, and required not a sign of the Lord, and God imputed that very faith unto Abraham himself for righteousness.'

"Hunnius, another divine, sets to his seal, on Romans iv, 3, 'The faith whereby Abraham believed God promising, was imputed unto him for righteousness.'

"Beza, upon the same scripture, says, 'Here the business is, concerning that which was imputed unto him, viz. his faith.'

"Junius and Tremellius are likewise of the same mind, on Gen. xv, 6, 'God esteemed (or accounted) him for righteous though wanting righteousness, and reckoned this in the place of righteousness, that he embraced the promise with a firm belief.'" (*Vide Goodwin on Justification.*)

Our English divines have generally differed in their interpretations, as they have embraced or opposed the Calvinistic system; but among the more moderate of that school there have not been wanting many who have bound their system to the express letter and obvious meaning of Scripture, on this point; not to mention either those who have adopted that middle scheme generally, but not with exactness attributed to Baxter, or the followers of the remonstrants.

When, however, we say, that faith is imputed for righteousness, in order to prevent misapprehension, and fully to answer the objections raised on the other side, the meaning of the different terms of this proposition ought to be explained. They are RIGHTEOUSNESS, FAITH, and IMPUTATION.

To explain the first, reference has sometimes been made to the three terms used by the Apostle Paul, δικαιωμα, δικαιωσις, and δικαιοσυνη; of

which, says Baxter, "the first usually signifies the practical or preceptive matter, that is, *righteousness;* the second, *active, efficient justification;* the third, the *state of the just*, qualitative or relative, or *ipsam justitiam*." Others have made these distinctions a little different; but not much help is to be derived from them, and it is much more important to observe, that the apostle often uses the term δικαιοσυνη, righteousness, in a passive sense for justification itself. So in Gal. ii, 21, "If righteousness (*justification*) come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain." Gal. iii, 21, "For if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness (*justification*) should have been by the law." Rom. ix, 30, "The Gentiles have attained to righteousness, (*justification*,) even the righteousness (*justification*) which is by faith." And in Rom. x, 4, "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth;" where, also, we must understand righteousness to mean justification. Rom. v, 18, 19, will also show, that with the apostle, "to make righteous," and "to justify," signify the same thing; for "justification of life," in the 18th verse, is called in the 19th, being "made righteous." To be accounted righteous is, then, in the apostle's style, where there has been personal guilt, to be justified; and what is accounted or imputed to us for righteousness, is accounted or imputed to us for our justification.

The second term of the above proposition which it is necessary to explain, is FAITH. The true nature of justifying faith will be explained below; all that is here necessary to remark is, that it is not every act of faith, or faith in the general truths of revelation, which is imputed for righteousness, though it supposes *them all*, and is the completion of them all. By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God; but it is not our faith in creation, which is imputed to us for righteousness. So in the case of Abraham; he not only had faith in the truths of the religion, of which he was the teacher and guardian, but had exercised affiance, also, in some particular promises of God, before he exhibited that great act of faith, which was "counted to him for righteousness," and which made his justification the pattern of the justification of sinful men in all ages. But having received the promise of a son, from whom the Messiah should spring, in whom all nations were to be blessed; and, "being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about a hundred years old, nor yet the deadness of Sarah's womb; he staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God, and being fully persuaded that what he had promised he was able also to perform, *and therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness*," Rom. iv, 19–23. His faith had Messiah for its great and ultimate object, and in its nature it was an entire affiance in the promise and faithfulness of God, with reference to the holy seed. So the object of

that faith which is imputed to us for righteousness is Christ; Christ as having made atonement for our sins, (the remission of our sins, as expressly taught by St. Paul, being obtained by "faith *in his blood*;") and it is in its nature an entire affiance in the promise of God to this effect, made to us through his atonement, and founded upon it. Faith being thus understood, excludes all notion of its meritoriousness. It is not faith, generally considered, which is imputed to us for righteousness; but faith (trust) in an atonement offered by another in our behalf; by which trust in something without us, we acknowledge our own insufficiency, guilt, and unworthiness, and directly ascribe the merit to that in which we trust, and which is not our own, namely, the propitiation of the blood of Christ.

The third term is IMPUTATION. The original verb is well enough translated to impute, in the sense of *to reckon*, to *account*; but, as we have stated above, it is never used to signify imputation in the sense of accounting the actions of one person to have been performed by another.

A man's sin or righteousness is imputed to him, when he is considered as actually the doer of sinful or of righteous acts, in which sense the word *repute* is in more general use; and he is, in consequence, reputed a vicious or a holy man. A man's sin or righteousness is imputed to him in its *legal consequence*, under a government by rewards and punishments; and then to impute sin or righteousness, signifies, in a legal sense, to reckon and to account it, to acquit or condemn, and forthwith to punish, or to exempt from punishment. Thus Shimei entreats David, that he would "not impute folly to him," that is, that he would not punish his folly. In this sense, too, David speaks of the blessedness of the man, to whom the Lord "imputeth not sin," that is, whom he forgives, so that the legal consequence of his sin shall not fall upon him. This non-imputation of sin, to a sinner, is expressly called the "imputation of righteousness, *without works*;" the imputation of righteousness is, then, the non-punishment, or pardon of sin; and if this passage be read in its connection, it will also be seen, that by "imputing" faith for righteousness, the apostle means precisely the same thing. "But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, *his faith is counted for righteousness*;" even as David, also, describeth the man to whom God *imputeth righteousness* without works, saying, blessed is the man whose *iniquities are forgiven*, and whose sins are covered, blessed is the man to whom the Lord "*imputeth not sin*." This quotation from David would have been nothing to the apostle's purpose, unless he had understood the forgiveness of sins, and the imputation of righteousness, and the non-imputation of sin, to signify the same thing as "counting faith for righteousness," with only this difference, that the introduction of the term "faith," marks the

manner in which the forgiveness of sin is obtained. To impute faith for righteousness, is nothing more than to be justified by faith, which is also called by St. Paul, "being made righteous," that is, being pardoned by an act of free forgiveness, through faith in Christ, in the condition of righteous men, in this respect, that the penalty of the law does not lie against them, and that they are restored to the Divine favour.

From this brief, but, it is hoped, clear explanation of these terms, righteousness, faith, and imputation, it will appear, that it is not quite correct in the advocates of the Scripture doctrine of the imputation of faith for righteousness, to say, that our faith in Christ is accepted in the place of personal obedience to the law, except, indeed, in this limited sense, that our faith in Christ as effectually exempts us from punishment, as if we had been personally obedient. The Scriptural doctrine is rather, that the death of Christ is accepted in the place of our personal punishment, on condition of our faith in him; and, that when faith in him is actually exerted, then comes in, on the part of God, the act of imputing, or reckoning righteousness to us; or, what is the same thing, accounting faith for righteousness, that is, pardoning our offences through faith, and treating us as the objects of his restored favour.

To this doctrine of the imputation of faith for righteousness, the principal objections which have been made, admit of an easy answer.

The first is that of the papists, who take the term justification to signify the making men morally just or righteous; and they, therefore, argue, that as faith alone is not righteousness in the moral sense, it would be false, and, therefore, impossible, to impute it for righteousness. But, as we have proved from Scripture, that justification simply signifies the pardon of sin, this objection has no foundation.

A second objection is, that if faith, that is, believing, is imputed for righteousness, then justification is by works, or by somewhat in ourselves. In this objection, the term works is equivocal. If it mean works of obedience to the moral law, the objection is unfounded, for faith is not a work of this kind; and if it mean the merit of works of any kind, it is equally without foundation, for no merit is allowed to faith, and faith, in the sense of exclusive affiance, or trusting in the merits of another, shuts out, by its very nature, all assumption of merit to ourselves, or there would be no need of resorting to another's merit; but if it mean, that faith or believing is the doing of something, in order to our justification, it is, in this view, the performance of a condition, a *sine qua non*, which is not only not forbidden by Scripture, but required of us,—"this is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent;" "he that believeth shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned." And so far is this considered by the Apostle Paul, as prejudicing the free grace of God in our justification, that he makes our justification by faith, the proof of its gratuitous nature, "for by *grace*

ye saved, through *faith*." "Therefore, it is by *faith*, that it might through *grace*."

A third objection is, that the imputation of faith for righteousness gives sion to boasting, which is condemned by the Gospel. The answer this is, 1. That the objection lies with equal strength against the ory of the imputation of the righteousness of Christ, since faith is ired in order to that imputation. 2. Boasting of our faith is cut off the consideration, that this faith itself is the gift of God. 3. If it not, yet the blessings which follow upon our faith, are not given reference to any worth or merit which there may be in our believ- but are given with respect to the death of Christ, from the bounty grace of God. 4. St. Paul was clearly of the contrary opinion, tells us that "boasting is excluded *by the law of faith*:" the reason which has been already stated, that trust in another for salvation, *ipso facto*, attribute the power, and consequently the honour of ing, to another, and denies both to ourselves.

ince, then, we are "justified by faith," our next inquiry must be, what more particularly, into the specific quality of that faith, which by the appointment of God, leads to this important change in our tions to the Being, whom we have offended, so that our offences are ly forgiven, and we are restored to his favour.

On the subject of justifying faith, so many distinctions have been set so many logical terms and definitions are found in the writings of matic divines, and often, as Baxter has it, "such quibbling and ing of a mere sound of words," that the simple Christian, to whom subject ought always to be made plain, has often been grievously plexed, and no small cause has been given for the derision of infi- s. On this, as on other points, we appeal "to the law and testi- ny," to Christ and his apostles, who are, at once, the only true autho- s, and teachers of the greatest simplicity.

We remark, then,

1. That in Scripture faith is presented to us under two leading views. first is that of assent or persuasion; the second, that of confidence reliance. That the former may be separated from the latter, is also , though the latter cannot exist without the former. Faith, in the e of intellectual assent to truth, is allowed to be possessed by devils. lead inoperative faith, is also supposed, or declared, to be possessed wicked men, professing Christianity; for our Lord represents per- coming to him at the last day, saying, "Lord, have we not prophe- in thy name," &c, to whom he will say, "Depart from me, I never w you," and yet the charge, in this case, does not lie against the erity of their belief, but against their conduct as "workers of ini- y." As this distinction is taught in Scripture, so it is also observed xperience, that assent to the truths of revealed religion may result

from examination and conviction, while yet the spirit and conduct may be unrenewed and wholly worldly.

On the other hand, that the faith which God requires of men always comprehends confidence or reliance, as well as assent or persuasion, is equally clear. The faith by which "the elders obtained a good report," was of this character; it united assent to the truth of God's revelations, to a noble confidence in his promises. "Our fathers *trusted* in Thee, and were not confounded." We have a farther illustration in our Lord's address to his disciples upon the withering away of the fig tree, "Have faith in God." He did not question whether they believed the existence of God, but exhorted them to confidence in his promises, when called by him to contend with mountainous difficulties. "Have faith in God, for verily I say unto you, that whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea, and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that these things which he saith shall come to pass, he shall have whatsoever he saith." It was in reference to his simple confidence in Christ's power, that our Lord so highly commended the centurion, Matt. viii, 10, and said, "I have not found so great *faith*, no, not in Israel." And all the instances of faith in the persons miraculously healed by Christ, were also of this kind: it was belief in his claims, and confidence in his goodness and power.

The faith in Christ, which in the New Testament is connected with salvation, is clearly of this nature; that is, it combines assent with reliance, belief with trust. "Whatsoever ye ask the Father in *my name*," that is, in dependence upon my interest and merits, "he shall give it you." Christ was preached both to Jews and Gentiles as the object of their *trust*, because he was preached as the only true sacrifice for sin; and they were required to renounce their dependence upon their own accustomed sacrifices, and to transfer that dependence to his death and mediation,—and "in his name shall the Gentiles trust." He is set forth as a propitiation, "through faith in his blood;" which faith can neither merely mean assent to the historical fact that his blood was shed by a violent death, nor mere assent to the general doctrine that his blood had an atoning quality; but as all expiatory offerings were *trusted* in as the means of propitiation both among Jews and Gentiles, that faith or trust was now to be exclusively rendered to the blood of Christ, heightened by the stronger demonstrations of a Divine appointment.

To the most unlettered Christian this then will be most obvious, that that faith in Christ which is required of us, consists both of *assent* and *trust*; and the necessity of maintaining these inseparably united will farther appear by considering, that it is not a blind and superstitious trust in the sacrifice of Christ, like that of the heathens in their sacrifices, which leads to salvation; nor the presumptuous trust of wicked and impenitent men, who depend on Christ to save them in their sins;

but such a trust as is exercised according to the authority and direction of the word of God; so that to know the Gospel in its leading principles, and to have a cordial belief in it, is necessary to that more specific act of faith which is called reliance, or in systematic language, *fiducial assent*, of which cometh salvation. The Gospel, as the scheme of man's salvation, supposes that he is under law; that this law of God has been violated by all; and that every man is under sentence of death.—Serious consideration of our ways, confession of the fact, and sorrowful conviction of the evil and danger of sin, will follow the gift of repentance, and a cordial belief of the testimony of God, and we shall thus turn to God with contrite hearts, and earnest prayers and supplications for his mercy. This is called "repentance toward God;" and repentance being the first subject of evangelical preaching, and then the belief of the Gospel, it is plain that Christ is only *immediately* held out in this Divine plan of our redemption as the object of trust in order to forgiveness to persons in this state of penitence, and under this sense of danger. The degree of sorrow for sin, and alarm upon this discovery of our danger as sinners, is nowhere fixed in Scripture; only it is supposed every where, that it is such as to lead men to inquire earnestly "what shall I do to be saved?" and to use all the appointed means of salvation, as those who feel that their salvation is at issue; that they are in a lost condition, and must be pardoned or perish. To all such persons, Christ, as the only atonement for sin, is exhibited as the object of their trust, with the promise of God, "that whosoever believeth in him shall not perish, but have everlasting life." Nothing is required of such but this actual trust in, and personal apprehension or taking hold of the merits of Christ's death as a sacrifice for sin; and upon their thus believing they are justified, their faith is "counted for righteousness."

This appears to be the plain Scriptural representation of this doctrine, and we may infer from it, 1. That the faith by which we are justified is not a mere assent to the doctrines of the Gospel, which leaves the heart unmoved and unaffected by a sense of the evil and danger of sin, and the desire of salvation, though it supposes this assent: nor, 2. Is it that more lively and cordial assent to, and belief in the doctrine of the Gospel, touching our sinful and lost condition, which is wrought in the heart by the Spirit of God, and from which springeth repentance, though this must precede it; nor, 3. Is it only the assent of the mind to the method by which God justifies the ungodly by faith in the sacrifice of his Son, though this is an element of it; but it is a hearty concurrence of "the will and affections with this plan of salvation, which implies a renunciation of every other refuge," "and an actual trust in the Saviour, and personal apprehension of his merits: such a belief of the Gospel by the power of the Spirit of God as

leads us to come to Christ, to receive Christ, to trust in Christ, and to commit the keeping of our souls into his hands, in humble confidence of his ability and his willingness to save us." (*Bunting's Sermon on Justification.*)

This is that qualifying condition to which the promise of God annexes justification; that without which justification would not take place; and in this sense it is that we are justified by faith; not by the merit of faith, but by faith instrumentally as this condition, for its connection with the benefit arises from the merits of Christ, and the promise of God. "If Christ had not merited, God had not promised; if God had not promised, justification had never followed upon this faith; so that the indissoluble connection of faith and justification is from God's institution, whereby he hath bound himself to give the benefit upon performance of the condition. Yet there is an aptitude in this faith to be made a condition, for no other act can receive Christ as a priest propitiating, and pleading the propitiation, and the promise of God for his sake to give the benefit. As receiving Christ and the gracious promise in this manner, it acknowledgeth man's guilt, and so man renounceth all righteousness in himself, and honoureth God the Father, and Christ the Son, the only Redeemer. It glorifies God's mercy and free grace in the highest degree. It acknowledgeth on earth, as it will be perpetually acknowledged in heaven, that the whole salvation of sinful man, from the beginning to the last degree thereof, whereof there shall be no end, is from God's freest love, Christ's merit and intercession, his own gracious promise, and the power of his own Holy Spirit." (*Lawson.*)

Justification by faith alone is thus clearly the doctrine of the Scriptures; and it was this great doctrine brought forth again from the Scriptures into public view, and maintained by their authority, which constituted one of the main pillars of the reformation from popery; and on which no compromise could be allowed with that corrupt Church which had substituted for it the merit of works. Melancthon, in his Apology for the Augsburg Confession, thus speaks:—"To represent justification by faith *only* has been considered objectionable, though Paul concludes that 'a man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the law;' 'that we are justified freely by his grace,' and 'that it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast.' If the use of the exclusive term *only* is deemed inadmissible, let them expunge from the writings of the apostles the exclusive phrases, '*by grace*,' '*not of works*,' '*the gift of God*,' and others of similar import." "We are accounted righteous before God," says the eleventh Article of the Church of England, "only for the merit of our Lord Jesus Christ, by faith, not for our works and deservings;" and again, in the Homily on Salvation, "St. Paul declares nothing upon the behalf of man, concerning his justifica-

tion, but only a true and lively faith, which, nevertheless, is the gift of God and not man's only work without God. And yet that faith doth not shut out repentance, hope, love, dread, and the fear of God, to be joined with faith in every man that is justified; but only shutteth them out from the office of justifying. So that although they be all present together in him that is justified, yet they justify not altogether."

It is an error, therefore, to suppose, as many have done, that the doctrine of justification by faith alone, is peculiarly a Calvinistic one. It has, in consequence, often been attacked under this mistake, and confounded with the peculiarities of that system, by writers of limited reading, or perverting ingenuity. It is the doctrine, as we have seen, not of the Calvinistic confessions only, but of the Lutheran Church, and of the Church of England. It was the doctrine of the Dutch Remonstrants, at least of the early divines of that party; and though among many divines of the Church of England, the errors of popery on the subject of justification have had their influence, and some, who have contended for justification by faith alone, have lowered the Scriptural standard of believing, the doctrine itself has often been very ably maintained by its later non-Calvinistic divines. Thus justification by faith alone: faith which excludes all works, both of the ceremonial and moral law; all works performed by Gentiles under the law of nature; all works of evangelical obedience, though they spring from faith; has been defended by Whitby, in the preface to his notes on the Epistle to the Galatians, though he was a decided anti-Calvinist. The same may be said of many others; and we may, finally, refer to Mr. Wesley, who revived, by his preaching and writings, an evangelical Arminianism in this country; and who has most clearly and ably established this truth in connection with the doctrine of general redemption, and God's universal love to man.

"By affirming that faith is the term or *condition of justification*, I mean, first, that there is no justification without it. 'He that believeth not is condemned already,' and so long as he believeth not, that condemnation cannot be removed, but the 'wrath of God abideth on him.' As 'there is no other name given under heaven, than that of Jesus of Nazareth,' no other merit *whereby* a condemned sinner can ever *be saved* from the guilt of sin; so there is no other way of obtaining a share in his merit, than *by faith in his name*. So that, as long as we are without this faith, we are 'strangers to the covenant of promise, we are aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and without God in the world.' Whatsoever virtues (so called) a man may have, I speak of those unto whom the Gospel is preached; for 'what have I to do to judge them that are without?' Whatsoever good works (so accounted) he may do, it profiteth not; he is still a *child of wrath*, still under the curse, till he believe in Jesus.

"Faith, therefore, is the *necessary* condition of justification. Yea, and the *only necessary* condition thereof. This is the second point carefully to be observed; that the very moment God giveth faith (for it is the gift of God) to the 'ungodly, that worketh not,' that 'faith is counted to him for righteousness.' He hath no righteousness at all antecedent to this, not so much as negative righteousness, or innocence. But 'faith is imputed to him for righteousness,' the very moment that he believeth. Not that God (as was observed before) thinketh him to be what he is not. But as 'he made Christ to be a sin offering for us,' that is, treated him as a sinner, punished him for our sins; so he counteth us righteous, from the time we believe in him; that is, he doth not punish us for our sins, yea, treats us as though we were guiltless and righteous.

"Surely the difficulty of assenting to the proposition, that faith is the *only condition* of justification, must arise from not understanding it.—We mean thereby this much, that it is the only thing, without which no one is justified; the only thing that is immediately, indispensably, absolutely requisite in order to pardon. As, on the one hand, though a man should have every thing else, without faith, yet he cannot be justified; so on the other, though he be supposed to want every thing else, yet if he hath faith, he cannot but be justified. For suppose a sinner of any kind or degree, in a full sense of his total ungodliness, of his utter inability to think, speak, or do good, and his absolute meetness for hell fire: suppose, I say, this sinner, helpless and hopeless, casts himself wholly on the mercy of God in Christ, (which indeed he cannot do but by the grace of God,) who can doubt but he is forgiven in that moment? Who will affirm, that any more is *indispensably required*, before that sinner can be justified?" (*Wesley's Sermons.*)

To the view of justifying faith we have attempted to establish, namely, the entire trust and reliance of an awakened and penitent sinner, in the atonement of Christ alone, as the meritorious ground of his pardon, some objections have been made, and some contrary hypotheses opposed, which it will be necessary to bring to the test of the word of God.

The general objection is, that it is a doctrine unfavourable to morality. This was the objection in St. Paul's day, and it has been urged through all ages ever since. It proceeds, however, upon a great misapprehension of the doctrine; and has sometimes been suggested by that real abuse of it, to which all truth is liable by men of perverted minds and corrupted hearts. Some of these have pretended, or deceived themselves into the conclusion, that if the atonement made for sin by the death of Christ only be relied upon, however presumptuously, the sins which they commit will be forgiven; and that there is no motive, at least from fear of consequences, to avoid sin. Others observing this

abuse, or misled, probably, by incautious statements of sincere persons on this point, have concluded this to be the logical consequence of the doctrine, however innocently it may sometimes be held. Attempts have, therefore, been made to guard the doctrine, and from these, on the other hand, errors have arisen. The Romish Church contends for justification by inherent righteousness, and makes faith a part of that righteousness. Others contend, that faith signifies obedience; others place justification in faith and good works united; others hold that faith gives us an interest in the merit of Christ, to make up the deficiency of a sincere but imperfect obedience; others think that true faith is in itself essentially, and, *per se*, the necessary root of obedience.

The proper answer to the objection, that justification by faith alone leads to licentiousness, is, that "though we are justified by faith *alone*," the faith by which we are justified is *not alone* in the heart which exercises it. In receiving Christ, as the writers of the reformation often say, "faith is *sola*, yet not *solitaria*." It is not the trust of a man asleep and secure, but the trust of one awakened and aware of the peril of eternal death, as the wages of sin; it is not the trust of a man ignorant of the spiritual meaning of God's holy law; but of one who is convinced and "slain" by it; not the trust of an impenitent, but of a penitent man; the trust of one, in a word, who feels, through the convincing power of the word and Spirit of God, that he is justly exposed to wrath, and in whom this conviction produces a genuine sorrow for sin, and an intense and supreme desire to be delivered from its penalty and dominion. Now that all this is substantially, or more particularly, in the experience of all who pass into this state of justification through faith, is manifest from the seventh and eighth chapters of the Epistle to the Romans, in which the moral state of man is traced in the experience of St. Paul as an example, from his conviction for sin by the law of God, revealed to him in its spirituality, to his entrance into the condition and privileges of a justified state. We see here, guilt, fear, a vain struggle with bondage, poignant distress, self despair, readiness to submit to any effectual mode of deliverance which may be offered, acceptance of salvation by Christ, the immediate removal of condemnation, dominion over sin, with all the fruits of regeneration, and the lofty hopes of the glory of God. So far, then, is the doctrine of justification by faith alone from leading to a loose and careless conduct, that that very state of mind in which alone this faith can be exercised, is one which excites the most earnest longings and efforts of mind to be free from the bondage of sin, as well as from its penalty; and to be free from its penalty in order that freedom from its bondage may follow. As this is proved by the seventh chapter of the epistle referred to, so the former part of the eighth, which continues the discourse, (unfortunately broken by the division of the chapters,)

shows the moral state which is the immediate result of "being in Christ Jesus," through the exercise of that faith which alone, as we have seen, can give us a personal interest in him. "There is now no *condemnation* to them that are in Christ Jesus." This is the first result of the pardon of sin, a consequent exemption from condemnation. The next is manifestly concomitant with it,—"who walk not after the flesh but after the *Spirit*," which is now in its fulness imparted to them; and by which, being regenerated, they are delivered from the bondage before described, and "walk" after his will, and under his sanctifying influence. This brings us precisely to the answer which the apostle himself gives to the objection to which we are referring, in the sixth chapter—"What shall we say then? shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid; how shall we who are *dead to sin* live any longer therein?" The moral-state of every man who is justified, is here described to be, that he is "dead to sin." Not that justification strictly is a death unto sin, or regeneration; but into this state it immediately brings us, so that, though they are properly distinguished in the order of our thoughts, and in the nature of things, they go together; he to whom "there is no condemnation," walks not after the flesh, but after the Spirit; and he who experiences the "abounding of the grace of God" in his pardon, is "dead to sin," and cannot, therefore, continue therein. This is the effect of the faith that justifies; from that alone, as it brings us to Christ our deliverer, our entire deliverance from sin can follow; and thus the doctrine of faith becomes exclusively the doctrine of holiness, and points out the only remedy for sin's dominion.

It is true, that some colour would be given to the contrary opinion, were it to be admitted, that this act of faith, followed by our justification, did indefeasibly settle our right to eternal blessedness by a title not to be vitiated by any future transgression; but this doctrine, which forms a part of the theory of the Calvinists, we shall, in its place, show to be unscriptural. It is enough here to say, that it has no connection with the doctrine of justification by faith alone, though so often ignorantly identified with it. Our probation is not terminated by our pardon. Wilful sin will infallibly plunge us again into condemnation, with heightened aggravations and hazards; and he only retains this state of favour who continues to believe with that same faith which brings back to him, not only the assurances of God's mercy, but the continually renewing influences of the Holy Spirit.

The doctrine of justification by faith alone, as stated in the Scriptures, needs not, therefore, any of those guards and cautions which we have enumerated above, and which all involve serious errors, which it may not be useless to point out.

1. The error of the Romish Church is to confound justification and sanctification. So the council of Trent declares, that "justification is not

only the remission of sins, but also the sanctification of the inner man; and that the only formal cause of justification is the righteousness of God, not that whereby he is just, but that by which he makes us just;" that is, inherently so. That justification and sanctification go together, we have seen; but this is not what is meant by the council. Their doctrine is, that man is made just or holy, and then justified. The answer to this has been already given. God "justifieth the *ungodly*;" and the Scriptures plainly mean by justification, not sanctification, but simply the remission of sin, as already established. The passages, also, above quoted, show that those who hold this doctrine reverse the order of the Scriptures. The sanctification which constitutes a man inherently righteous, is concomitant with justification, but does not precede it. Before "condemnation" is taken away, he cries out, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death;" when "there is now no condemnation," he "walks not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." In the nature of things, too, justification and sanctification are distinct. The active sanctification of the Spirit, taken in itself, either habitually or actually, and as inherent in us, can in nowise be justification, for justification is the remission of sins. God gave this Spirit to angels, he gave it to Adam in the day of creation, and this Spirit did sanctify, and now doth sanctify the blessed angels, yet this sanctification is not remission. Sanctification cannot be the formal cause of justification, any more than justification can be the formal cause of glorification; for however all these may be connected, they are things perfectly distinct and different in their nature. "There be two kinds of Christian righteousness," says Hooker, "the one without us, which we have by imputation; the other in us, which consisteth of faith, hope, and charity, and other Christian virtues. God giveth us both the one justice and the other; the one by accepting us for righteous in Christ, the other by working Christian righteousness in us." (*Discourse of Justification.*)

2. To the next opinion, that justifying faith, in the Christian sense, includes works of evangelical obedience, and is not, therefore, simple affiance or fiducial assent, the answer of Whitby is forcible:—"The Scripture is express and frequent in the assertion, that believers are justified by faith, in which expression either faith must include works, or evangelical obedience, or it doth not: if it doth not, we are justified by faith alone; and that it doth not formally include works of evangelical righteousness appears, 1. From the plain distinction which the Scripture puts between them, when it informs us that faith works by love, is shown forth by our works, and exhorts us to add to our faith virtue, to virtue knowledge; and, 2. Because it is not reasonable to conceive, that Christ and his apostles, making use of a word which had a known and fixed import, should mean more by this word than what it signified in common use, as sure they must have done, had they included in the meaning of the

word the whole of our evangelical righteousness." (*Preface to Galatians.*) To this we may add, that in every discourse of St. Paul, as to our justification, faith and works are opposed to each other; and farther, that his argument necessarily excludes works of evangelical obedience. For as it clearly excludes all works of ceremonial law, so also all works of obedience to the moral law; and that not with any reference to their degree, as perfect or imperfect, but with reference to their nature as works; so then, for this same reason must all works of evangelical obedience be excluded from the office of justifying, for they are also moral works, works of obedience to the same law, which is in force under the Gospel; and however they may be performed; whether by the assistance of the Spirit, or without that assistance; whether they spring from faith or any other principle, these are mere circumstances which alter not the nature of the acts themselves, they are *works* still, and are opposed by the apostle to *grace* and *faith*. "And if by grace, then it is no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace; but if it be of works, then is it no more (of) grace, otherwise work is no more work," Rom. xi, 6.

3. A third notion which has been adopted to guard the doctrine of justification by faith is, that faith apprehends and appropriates the merits of Christ to make up for the deficiency of our imperfect obedience. There must, therefore, be a sincere endeavour after obedience, and in this the required guard is supposed to lie; but to secure justification where obedience is still imperfect though sincere, requires faith.

It is a sufficient refutation of this theory, that no intimation is given of it in Scripture, and it is indeed contradicted by it. Either this sincere and imperfect obedience has its share in our justification, or it has not; if it has, we are justified by works and faith united, which has just been disproved; if it has not, then we are justified by faith alone, in the manner before explained.

4. The last error referred to is that which represents faith as, *per se*, the necessary root of obedience: so that justification by faith alone may be allowed; but then the guard against abuse is said to lie in this, that true faith is itself so eminent a virtue, that it naturally produces good works.

The objection to this statement lies not indeed so much to the substantial truth of the doctrine taught by it, or to what is perhaps intended by most of those who so speak, for similar modes of expression we find in the writings of many of the elder divines of the reformation, who most strenuously advocated justification by faith alone; but to the view under which it is presented. Faith, when genuine, is necessarily the "root and mother of obedience;" good works of every kind, without exception, do also necessarily spring from it; but though we say *necessarily*, yet we do not say *naturally*. The error lies in considering faith

in Christ as so eminently a virtue, so great an act of obedience, that it must always argue a converted and renewed state of mind wherever it exists, from which, therefore, obedience must flow. We have, however, seen that regeneration does not precede justification; that till justification man is under bondage, and that he does not "walk after the Spirit," until he is so "in Christ Jesus;" that to him "there is now no condemnation;" yet faith, all acknowledge, must precede justification, and it cannot, therefore, presuppose a regenerate state of mind. The truth, then, is, that faith does not produce obedience by any virtue there is in it, *per se;* nor as it supposes a previous renewal of heart; but as it unites to Christ, gives us a personal interest in the covenant of God's mercy, and obtains for us, as an accomplished condition, our justification, from which flow the gift of the Holy Spirit, and the regeneration of our nature. The strength of faith lies not, then, in what it is in itself, but in what it interests us in; it necessarily leads to good works, because it necessarily leads to justification, on which immediately follows our "new creation in Christ Jesus to good works, that we may walk in them."

There are yet a few theories on the subject of justification to be stated and examined, which, however, the principles already established will enable us briefly to dismiss.

That of the Romish Church, which confounds sanctification with justification, has been already noticed. The influence of this theory may be traced in the writings of some leading divines of the English Church, who were not fully imbued with the doctrines of the reformers on this great point, such as Bishop Taylor, Achbishop Tillotson, and others, who make regeneration necessary to justification; and also in many divines of the Calvinistic nonconformist class, who make regeneration, also, to precede justification, though not like the former, as a condition of it.

The source of this error appears to be twofold.

It arises, first, from a loose and general notion of the Scriptural doctrine of regeneration; and, secondly, from confounding that change which true evangelical repentance doubtless implies, with regeneration itself. A few observations will dissipate these erroneous impressions.

As to those previous changes of mind and conduct, which they often argue from, as proving a new state of mind and character, they are far from marking that defined and unequivocal state of renovation, which our Lord expresses by the phrases "born again," and "born of the Spirit," and which St. Paul evidently explains by being "created anew," "a new creation;" "living after the Spirit," and "walking in the Spirit." In the established order in which God effects this mighty renovation of a nature previously corrupt, in answer to prayers directed to him, with confidence in his promises to that effect in Christ Jesus, there

must be a previous process, which divines have called by the expressive names of "awakening," and "conviction;" that is, the sleep of indifference to spiritual concerns is removed, and conviction of the sad facts of the case of a man who has hitherto lived in sin, and under the sole dominion of a carnal and earthly mind, is fixed in the judgment and the conscience. From this arises an altered and a corrected view of things; apprehension of danger; desire of deliverance; abhorrence of the evils of the heart and the life; strong efforts for freedom, resisted however by the bondage of established habits and innate corruptions; and a still deeper sense, in consequence, of the need not only of pardon, but of that almighty and renewing influence which alone can effect the desired change. It is in this state of mind, that the prayer becomes at once heartfelt and appropriate, "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me."

But all this is not regeneration; it is rather the effect of the full and painful discovery of the want of it; nor will "fruits meet for repentance," the effects of an alarmed conscience, and of a corrected judgment; the efforts to be right, however imperfect; which are the signs, we also grant, of sincerity, prove more than that the preparatory process is going on under the influence of the Holy Spirit. Others may endeavour to persuade a person in this state of mind that he is regenerate, but the absence of love to God as his reconciled Father; the evils which he detests having still, in many respects, the dominion over him; the resistance of his heart to the unaccustomed yoke, when the sharp pangs of his convictions do not, for the moment, arm him with new powers of contest; his pride; his remaining self righteousness; his reluctance to be saved wholly as a sinner, whose repentance and all its fruits, however exact and copious, merit nothing; all assure him, that even should he often feel that he is "not far from the kingdom of God," he has not entered it; that his burden is not removed; that his bonds are not broken; that he is not "walking in the Spirit;" that he is at best but a struggling slave, not "the Lord's free man." But there is a point which, when passed, changes the scene. He believes wholly in Christ; he is justified by faith; he is comforted by the Spirit's "witnessing with his spirit," that he is now a child of God; he serves God from filial love; he has received new powers; the chain of his bondage is broken, and he is delivered; he walks not after the flesh, but after the Spirit; he is "dead to sin, and cannot continue longer therein;" and the fruits of the Spirit are in him—"love, joy, peace, gentleness, goodness, meekness, faith, temperance." He is now, and not till now, in A REGENERATE STATE, as that state is described in the Scriptures. Before he was a seeker, now he has obtained what he sought; and he obtains it concomitantly with justification.

Still indeed it may be said, that, call this previous state what you will,

either regeneration or repentance, it is necessary to justification; and, therefore, justification is not by faith alone. We answer, that we cannot call it a regenerated state, a being "born of the Spirit," for the Scriptures do not so designate it; and it is clear, that the fruits of the Spirit do not belong to it; and, therefore, there is an absence, not of the work of the Spirit, for all has its origin there, but of *that work* of the Spirit by which we are "born again" strictly and properly. Nor is the connection of this preparatory process with justification of the same nature as that of faith with justification. It is necessary, it is true, as hearing the word is necessary, for "faith cometh by hearing;" and it is necessary as leading to prayer, and to faith, for prayer is the language of discovered want, and faith in another, in the sense of trust, is the result of self diffidence, and self despair; but it is necessary remotely, not immediately. This distinction is clearly and accurately expressed by Mr. Wesley. (*Farther Appeal, &c.*) "And yet I allow you this, that although both repentance and the fruits thereof, are, in some sense, necessary before justification, yet neither the one nor the other is necessary in the same sense, nor in the same degree with faith. Not in the same degree; for in whatever moment a man believes, in the Christian sense of the word, he is justified; his sins are blotted out; his faith is counted to him for righteousness. But it is not so at whatever moment he repents, or brings forth any or all the fruits of repentance. Faith alone, therefore justifies, which repentance alone does not; much less any outward work; and consequently none of these are necessary to justification in the same degree as faith. Nor in the same sense; for none of these has so direct and immediate relation to justification as faith. This is proximately necessary thereto; repentance and its fruits, remotely, as these are necessary to the increase and continuance of faith. And even in this sense, these are only necessary on supposition that there is time and opportunity for them; for in many instances there is not; but God cuts short his work, and faith prevents the fruits of repentance. So that the general proposition is not overthrown, but clearly established by these concessions, and we conclude still, both on the authority of Scripture and the Church, that faith alone is the proximate condition of justification." (*Sermons.*)

If regeneration, in the sense in which it is used in Scripture, and not loosely and vaguely, as by many divines, both ancient and modern, is then a concomitant of justification, it cannot be a condition of it; and as we have shown, that all the changes which repentance implies, fall short of regeneration, repentance is not an evidence of a regenerate state; and thus the theory of justification by regeneration is untenable. A second theory, not indeed substantially different from the former, but put into different phrase, and more formally laboured, is that of Bishop Bull, which gave rise to the celebrated controversy of his day, upon the

publication of his *Harmonia Apostolica;* and it is one which has left the deepest impress upon the views of the clergy of the English Church, and contributed more than any thing else to obscure her true doctrine, as contained in her articles and homilies, on this leading point of experimental theology. This theory is professedly that of justification by works, with these qualifications, that the works are evangelical, or such as proceed from faith; that they are done by the assistance of the Spirit of God; and that such works are not meritorious, but a necessary condition of justification. To establish this hypothesis, it was necessary to avoid the force of the words of St. Paul, and the learned prelate just mentioned, therefore, reverses the usual practice of commentators, which is to reconcile St. James to St. Paul on the doctrine of justification; and assuming that St. James speaks clearly and explicitly, and St. Paul, on this point, things "hard to be understood;" he interprets the latter by the former, and reconciles St. Paul to St. James. According then to this opinion, St. James explicitly asserts the doctrine of justification of sinful men before God by the works which proceed from faith in Christ: St. Paul, therefore, when he denies that man can be justified by works, refers simply to works of obedience to the Mosaic law; and by the faith which justifies, he means the works which spring from faith. Thus the two apostles are harmonized by Bishop Bull.

The main pillar of this scheme is, that St. James teaches the doctrine of justification before God by works springing from faith in Christ; and as it is necessary in a discourse on justification, to ascertain the meaning of this apostle, in the passages referred to, both because his words may appear to form an objection to the doctrine of justification by faith alone, which we have established; and, also, on account of the misleading statements which are found in many of the attempts which have been made to reconcile the two apostles, this may be a proper place for that inquiry; the result of which will show, that Bishop Bull and the divines of that school, have as greatly mistaken St. James as they have mistaken St. Paul.

We observe then, 1. That to interpret St. Paul by St. James, involves this manifest absurdity, that it is interpreting a writer who treats professedly, and in a set discourse, on the subject in question, the justification of a sinful man before God, by a writer who, if he could be allowed to treat of that subject with the same design, does it but incidentally. This itself makes it clear, that the great *axiomata*, the principles of this doctrine, must be first sought for in the writer who enters professedly, and by copious argument, into the inquiry.

But, 2. The two apostles do not engage in the same argument, and for this reason, that they are not addressing themselves to persons in the same circumstances. St. Paul addresses the unbelieving Jews, who sought justification by obedience to the law of Moses, moral and cere

monial; proves that all men are guilty, and that neither Jew nor Gentile can be justified by works of obedience to any law, and that therefore justification must be by faith alone. On the other hand, St. James, having to do, in his epistle with such as professed the Christian faith and justification by it, but erring dangerously about the nature of faith, affirming that faith, in the sense of opinion or mere belief of doctrine, would save them, though they should remain destitute of a real change in the moral frame and constitution of their minds, and give no evidence of this in a holy life, it became necessary for him to plead the renovation of man's nature, and evangelical obedience, as the necessary fruits of real or living faith. The question discussed by St. Paul is, whether works would *justify*; that by St. James is, whether a dead faith, the mere faith of assent would *save*.

3. St. Paul and St. James do not use the term justification in the same sense. The former uses it as we have seen, for the pardon of sin, the accepting and treating as righteous one who is guilty but penitent. But, that St. James does not speak of this kind of justification is most evident, from his reference to the case of Abraham. "Was not Abraham, our father, justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar?" Does St. James mean, that Abraham was then justified in the sense of being forgiven? Certainly not; for St. Paul, when speaking of the justification of Abraham, in the sense of his forgiveness before God, by the imputation of his faith for righteousness, fixes that event many years previously, even before Isaac was born, and when the promise of a seed was made to him; for it is added by Moses when he gives an account of this transaction. Gen. xv, 6, "And he believed in the Lord, and he counted it to him for righteousness." If then, St. James speaks of the same kind of justification, he contradicts St. Paul and Moses, by implying that Abraham was not pardoned and received into God's favour, until the offering of Isaac. If no one will maintain this, then the justification of Abraham, mentioned by St. James, it is plain, does not mean the forgiveness of his sins, and he uses the term in a different sense to St. Paul.

4. The only sense, then, in which St. James can take the term justification, when he says that Abraham was "justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar," is, that his works manifested or proved that he was justified, proved that he was really justified by faith, or, in other words, that the faith by which he was justified, was not dead and inoperative, but living and active. This is abundantly confirmed by what follows. So far is St. James from denying that Abraham was justified by the imputation of his faith for righteousness, long before he offered up his son Isaac, that he expressly allows it by quoting the passage, Gen. xv, 6, in which this is said to have taken place at least twenty-five years before; and he makes use of his subsequent works in the

argument, expressly to illustrate the vital and obedient nature of the faith by which he was at first justified. "Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was his faith made perfect, and the scripture *was fulfilled*, which saith, 'Abraham believed God,' (in a transaction twenty-five years previous,) 'and it was imputed to him for righteousness, and he was called the friend of God.'" This quotation of James, from Gen. xv, 6, demands special notice. "And the scripture," he says, "*was fulfilled*, which saith," &c. Whitby paraphrases, "*was again* fulfilled;" some other commentators say it "*was twice* fulfilled," in the transaction of Isaac, and at the previous period to which the quotation refers. These comments are, however, hasty, darken the argument of St. James, and have, indeed, no discernible meaning at all. For do they mean that Abraham was twice justified, in the sense of being twice pardoned; or that his justification was begun at one of the periods referred to, and finished twenty-five years afterward? These are absurdities; and if they will not maintain them, in what sense do they understand St. James to use the phrase, "*and the scripture was fulfilled?*" The scripture alluded to by St. James is that given above, "and he believed in the Lord, and he counted it to him for righteousness." When was the *first fulfilment* of this scripture, of which they speak? It could not be in the transaction of Abraham's proper justification, through his faith in the promise respecting "his seed," as mentioned, Gen. xv, 6, for that scripture is an historical narration of the fact of that, his justification. The fact, then, was not a *fulfilment* of that part of Scripture, but that part of Scripture a subsequent narration of the fact. The only fulfilment, consequently, that it had, was in the transaction adduced by St. James, the offering of Isaac; but if Abraham had been, in the proper sense, justified then, that event could be no *fulfilment*, in their sense, of a scripture which is a narrative of what was done twenty-five years before, and which relates only to what God then did, namely, "count the faith of Abraham to him for righteousness." The only senses in which the term "fulfil" can be taken in this passage are, that of *accomplishment*, or that of *illustration* and *establishment*. The first cannot apply here, for the passage is neither typical nor prophetic, and we are left, therefore, to the second; "and the scripture was fulfilled," *illustrated*, and *confirmed*, which saith, "Abraham believed in God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness." It was established and confirmed that he was, in truth, a man truly justified of God, and that the faith by which he was justified was living and operative.

5. As St. James does not use the term justification in the sense of the forgiveness of sin, when he speaks of the justification of Abraham by works, so neither can he use it in this sense in the general conclusion which he draws from it; "Ye see, then, how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only." The ground on which he rests this general

inference is the *declarative justification* of Abraham, which resulted from his lofty act of obedience, in the case of Isaac, and which was eminently itself an act of obedient faith; and the justification of which he speaks in the general conclusion of the argument, must, therefore, be taken in the same sense. He speaks not of the act of being justified before God, and the means by which it is effected; but of being proved to be in a manifest and Scripturally approved state of justification. "Ye see, then, that by works a man is" shown to be in a "justified" *state;* or how his profession of being in the Divine favour is justified and confirmed "by works, and not by faith only," or mere doctrinal faith; not by the faith of mere intellectual assent, not by the faith which is dead, and unproductive of good works.

Lastly, so far are the two apostles from being in opposition to each other, that, as to faith as well as works, they most perfectly agree. St. James declares, that no man can be saved by mere faith. But, then, by faith he means, not the same faith to which St. Paul attributes a saving efficacy. His argument sufficiently shows this. He speaks of a faith which is "*a'-ne*" and "dead," St. Paul of the faith which is never alone, the בדד it alone justifieth; which is not *solitaria*, though it is *sola* in this work, as our old divines speak; the faith of a penitent, humbled man, who not only yields speculative assent to the scheme of Gospel doctrine, but flies with confidence to Christ, as his sacrifice and Redeemer, for pardon of sin and deliverance from it; the faith, in a word, which is a fruit of the Spirit, and that by which a true believer enters into and lives the spiritual life, because it vitally unites him to Christ, the fountain of that life—"the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."

There is then no foundation in the Epistle of St. James for the doctrine of justification by works, according to Bishop Bull's theory. The other arguments by which this notion has been supported, are refuted by the principles which have been already laid down, and confirmed from the word of God.

A third theory has, also, had great influence in the Church of England, and is to this day explicitly asserted by some of its leading divines and prelates. It acknowledges that, provided faith be understood to be sincere and genuine, men are justified by faith only, and in this they reject the opinion just examined; but then they take faith to be mere belief, assent to the truth of the Gospel, and nothing more. This is largely defended by Whitby in his preface to the Galatians, which, in other respects ably shows that justification is in no sense by works, either natural, Mosaic, or evangelical. The faith by which we are justified, he describes to be "a full assent to, or firm persuasion of mind concerning the truth of what is testified by God himself respecting our Lord Jesus Christ," and in particular, "that he was Christ the Son of

God." "This was the faith which the apostles required in order to baptism;" "by this faith men were put into the way of salvation, and if they persevered in it, would obtain it."

Nearly the same view is taught by the present bishop of Winchester, in his Refutation of Calvinism, and his Elements of Theology, and it is, probably, the opinion of the great body of the national clergy, not distinguished as evangelical, though with many it is also much mingled with the scheme of Bishop Bull. "Faith and belief," says Bishop Tomline, "strictly speaking mean the same thing." If, then, a penitent heathen or Jew, convinced that Jesus was the Messiah, the promised Saviour of the world, "having understood that baptism was essential to the blessings of the new and merciful dispensation, of the Divine authority of which he was fully persuaded, would eagerly apply to some one of those who were commissioned to baptize; his baptism, administered according to the appointed form to a true believer, would convey justification; or in other words, the baptized person would receive remission of his past sins, would be reconciled to God, and be accounted just and righteous in his sight." (*Refutation of Calvinism*, chap. iii.) "Faith, therefore, including repentance for former offences, was, as far as the person himself was concerned, the sole requisite for justification; no previous work was enjoined; but baptism was invariably the instrument, or external form by which justification was conveyed." (*Refutation of Calvinism*, chap. iii.)

The confusedness and contrariety of this scheme will be obvious to the reader.

It will not be denied to Dr. Whitby, that the apostles baptized upon the profession of a belief in the Messiahship and Sonship of our Lord; nor is it denied to Bishop Tomline, that when baptism, in the case of true penitents, was not only an outward expression of the faith of assent; but accompanied by a solemn committal of the spiritual interests of the baptized to Christ, by an act of confidence, the power to do which, was, no doubt, often given as a part of the grace of baptism, justification would follow; the real question is, whether justification follows mere assent. This is wholly contradicted by the argument of St. James; for if *dead faith*, by which he means mere assent to doctrine, is no evidence of a justified state, it cannot be justifying; which I take to be as conclusive an argument as possible. For St. James does not deny faith to him who has faith without works; if then he has faith, the apostle can mean by faith nothing else certainly than assent or *belief*: "Thou believest there is one God, thou doest well;" and as this faith, according to him is "alone," by faith he means *mere* assent of the intellect. This argument shows, that those theologians are unquestionably in error, who make justification the result of mere assent to the evidence of the truth of the Gospel, or doctrinal belief. And neither Dr. Whitby nor Bishop Tomline are able to carry this doctrine throughout. The former con-

tends, that this assent, when firm and sincere, must produce obedience; but St. James denies neither firmness of conviction, nor sincerity to his inoperative faith, and yet, he tells us, that it remained "alone," and was "dead." Beside, if faith justifies only as it produces obedience, it does not justify alone, and the justifying efficacy lies in the virtual or actual obedience proceeding from it, which gives up Whitby's main position, and goes into the scheme of Bishop Bull. Equally inconsistent is Bishop Tomline. He acknowledges that "belief, or faith, may exist, unaccompanied by any of the Christian graces;" and that "this faith does not justify." How then will he maintain that justification is by faith alone, in the sense of belief? Again he tells us, that the faith which is the means of salvation, "is that belief of the truth of the Gospel which produces obedience to its precepts, and is accompanied by a firm reliance upon the merits of Christ." Still farther, that "baptism is the instrument invariably by which justification is conveyed." (*Refutation of Calvinism*, chap. iii.) Thus, then, we are first told, that justifying faith is belief or assent; then that various other things are connected with it to render it justifying, such as previous repentance, the power of producing obedience, reliance on the merits of Christ, and baptism! All this confusion and contradiction shows, that the doctrine of justification by faith alone, in the sense of belief or intellectual assent only, cannot be maintained, and that, in order to avoid the worse than Antinomian consequence, which would follow from the doctrine, its advocates are obliged so to explain, and qualify, and add, as to make many approaches to that true doctrine against which they hurl both censure and ridicule.

The error of this whole scheme lies in not considering the essence of justifying faith to be trust or confidence in Christ as our sacrifice for sin, which, though Whitby and others of his school, have attempted to ridicule by calling it "a leaning or rolling of ourselves upon him for salvation," availing themselves of the coarse terms used by scoffers, is yet most manifestly, as we have indeed already seen, the only sense in which faith can be rationally taken, when a sacrifice for sin, a means of reconciliation with God, is its object, and indeed when any promise of God is made to us. It is not surely that we may merely *believe* that the death of Christ is a sacrifice for sin, that he is "set forth as a propitiation," but that we may *trust* in its efficacy; it is not that we may merely *believe* that God has made promises to us, that his merciful engagements in our favour are recorded; but that we may have confidence in them, and thus be supported by them. This was the faith of the saints of the Old Testament. "By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed, and he went out, not knowing whither he went." His faith was confidence. "Though he slay me, yet will I *trust* in him." "Who is among you that feareth the Lord? let him *trust* in the name of the Lord, and *stay* upon his God."

"Blessed is the man that *trusteth* in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is." It is under this notion of *trust* that faith is continually represented to us also in the New Testament. "In his name shall the Gentiles *trust*." "For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we *trust* in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, and especially of those that believe." "For I know whom I have believed, (trusted,) and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which *I have committed* unto him against that day." "If we hold the beginning of our *confidence* steadfast to the end."

The fourth theory which we may notice, is that which rejects justification in the present life, and defers its administration to the last day. This has had a few, and but a few abettors, and the principal arguments for it are, 1. That all the consequences of sin are not removed from even believers in the present life, whereas a full remission of sin necessarily implies the full and immediate remission of punishment. 2. That if believers are justified, that is judged in the present life, they must be judged twice, whereas there is but one judgment, which is to take place at Christ's second coming. 3. That the Scriptures speak of justification at the last day, as when our Lord declares "that every idle word that men shall speak they shall give an account thereof in the day of judgment," and adds, "by thy words thou shalt (then) be justified, and by thy words shalt thou be condemned."

To all these arguments, which a few words will refute, the general, and, indeed, sufficient answer is, that justification in the sense of the forgiveness of sins, the only import of the term in question, is constantly and explicitly spoken of as a present attainment. This is declared to be the case with Abraham and with David, by St. Paul; it was surely the case with those to whom our Lord said, "thy sins be forgiven thee;" and with her of whom he declared, that having "much forgiven she loved much." "We have," says St. Paul, writing to the Colossians, "redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins." So plain a point needs no confirmation by more numerous quotations; and the only means which the advocates of the theory have resorted to for explaining such passages consistently with their own views, is absurdly, and we may add audaciously, to resolve them into a *figure of speech* which speaks of a future thing when certain, as present; a mode of interpretation which sets all criticism at defiance.

As to the first argument, we may observe that it assumes, that it is essential to the pardon of sin, that all its consequences should be immediately removed, or otherwise they assert it is no pardon at all. This is to affirm, that to be freed from punishment in another life, and finally, and indeed in a short time, to be freed from the afflictions of this is not a pardon; which no one can surely deliberately affirm. This notion, also, loses sight entirely of the obviously wise ends which are answered

by postponing the removal of affliction and diseases from those who are admitted into the Divine favour, till another life; and of the sanctification of all these to their benefit, so that they entirely lose, when they are not the consequence of new offences, their *penal* character, and become parts of a merciful discipline, "working together for good."

The second argument assumes, that because there is but one general judgment, there can be no acts of judgment which are private and personal. But the one is in no sense contrary to the other. Justification may, therefore, be allowed to be a judicial proceeding under a merciful constitution, as before explained, and yet offer no obstruction to a general, public, and final judgment. The latter indeed grows out of the former; for since this offer of mercy is made to all men by the Gospel, they are accountable for the acceptance or refusal of it, which it is a part of the general judgment to exhibit, that the righteousness of God, in the punishment of them "that believe not the Gospel," may be demonstrated and the ground of the salvation of those who have been sinners, as well as the rest of mankind, may be declared. We may also farther observe, that so far is the appointment of one general judgment from interfering with acts of judgment in the proceedings of the Most High as the governor of men, that he is constantly judging men, both as individuals and nations, and distributing to them both rewards and punishments.

The argument from the justification of men at the last day, proceeds, also, upon a false assumption. It takes justification then and now for the same act; and it supposes it to proceed upon the same principle; neither of which is true.

1. It is not true that it is the same act. The justification of believers in this life, is the remission of sins; but where are we taught that remission of sins is to be attained in the day of judgment? Plainly nowhere, and the whole doctrine of Scripture is in opposition to this notion, for it confines our preparation for judgment to the present life only. When our Lord says, "by thy words thou shalt be justified," he does not mean "by thy words thy sins shall be forgiven;" and if this is not maintained the passage is of no force in the argument.

2. Justification at the last day, does not proceed upon the same principle, and, therefore, is not to be concluded to be the continuance of the same act, commenced on earth. Justification at the last day is, on all hands, allowed to be by works; but, if that justification mean the pardon of sin, then the pardon of sin is by works and not by faith, a doctrine we have already refuted from the clear evidence of Scripture itself. The justification of the last day is, therefore, not the pardon of sin; for if our sins are previously pardoned, we then need no pardon; if they are not pardoned, no provision for their remission then remains. And as this justification is not *pardon*, neither is it *acquittal*; for, as to those

sins of which the wicked have not been guilty, they will not be acquitted of them, because an all-wise God will not charge them with those of which they have not been guilty, and there can be no acquittal as to those they have committed. Believers will not be acquitted of the sins for which they have obtained forgiveness, because they will not be charged upon them: "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth." So far from their being arraigned as sinners, that their justification on earth may be formally pleaded for their acquittal at the last day, that the very circumstances of the judgment will be a public recognition, from its very commencement, of their pardon and acceptance upon earth. "The dead in Christ shall rise first." "They rise to glory, not to shame," their bodies being made like unto Christ's "glorious body." Those that sleep in Christ shall "God bring with him," in his train of triumph; they shall be set on his "right hand," in token of acceptance and favour; and of the books which shall be opened, one is "the book of life," in which their names have been previously recorded. It follows, then, that our justification at the last day, if we must still use that phrase, which has little to support it in Scripture, and might be well substituted for others less equivocal, can only be *declarative*, *approbatory*, and *remunerative*. Declarative, as recognising, in the manner just stated, the justification of believers on earth; approbatory of their works of faith and love; and *remunerative* of them, as made graciously rewardable, in their different measures, by the evangelical constitution.

And here it may not be amiss to notice an argument against the doctrine of justification by faith alone, and in favour of justification by faith and works, which is drawn from the proceedings of the last day:—"If works wrought through faith are the ground of the sentence passed upon us in that day, then they are a necessary condition of our justification." This is an argument which has been built much upon, from Bishop Bull to the present day. Its fallacy lies in considering the works of believers as the only, or chief ground of that sentence; that is, the administration of eternal life to them in its different degrees of glory at the coming of Christ. That it is not so, is plain from those express passages of Scripture, which represent eternal life as the fruit of Christ's atonement, and the gift of God through him. "By grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works," &c. "Why," says an old writer, "might he not have said, by grace are ye saved, through faith and works; it were as easy to say the one as the other." (9) If our works are the sole ground of that sentence of eter-

(9) The reader will also recollect Rom. vi, 23, "The wages of sin is death; but the *gift of God* is eternal life, through our Lord Jesus Christ." The following passages expressly make the atonement of Christ the ground of our title to eternal life. "By his own *blood* he entered in once into the holy place, having

nal life, then is the reward of righteousness of debt according to the law of works, and not of grace; but if of grace, then works are not the sole or chief ground of our final reward. If of debt, we claim in our own right; and the works rewarded must be in every sense our own; but good works are not our own works; we are "created in Christ Jesus unto good works;" and derive all the power to do them from him. If, then, we have not the right of reward in ourselves, we have it in another; and thus we again come to another and higher ground of the final sentence than the works wrought even by them that believe, namely, the covenant right which we derive from Christ—right grounded on promise. If then it is asked, in what sense good works are any ground at all of the final sentence of eternal life, we answer, they are so secondarily and subordinately, 1. As evidences of that faith and that justified state from which alone truly good works can spring. 2. As qualifying us for heaven; they and the principles from which they spring constituting our holiness, our "meetness for the inheritance of the saints in light." 3. As rewardable; but still of grace not of debt, of promise not of our own right, since after all we have done, though we had lived and suffered as the apostles to whom the words were first addressed, we are commanded to confess ourselves "unprofitable servants." In this sense good works, though they have no part in the office of justifying the ungodly, that is, in obtaining forgiveness of sin, are necessary to salvation, though they are not the ground of it. As they are pleasing to God, so are they approved and rewarded by God. "They prevent future guilt, but take away no former guilt, evidence our faith and title to everlasting glory, strengthen our union with Christ because they strengthen faith, confirm our hope, glorify God, give good example to men, make us more capable of communion with God, give some content to our consciences, and there is happiness in the doing of them, and in the remembrance of them when done. Blessed are they who always abound in them, for they know that their labour is not in vain in the Lord. Yet Bellarmin, though a great advancer of merit, thought it the safest way to put our sole trust not in these good works, but in Christ. It is, indeed, not only the safest, but the only way so to do, if we would be justified before God. True, we shall be judged according to our works, but it doth not follow that we shall be justified by our works. God did never ordain good works, which are the fruits of a sincere faith in Christ, to acquire a right unto the remission of sin and eternal life; but to be a means by which we may obtain possession of the rewards he hath promised." (*Lawson's Theo-Politica.*)

obtained *eternal redemption* for us." "He is the Mediator of the New Testament, that, by *means of death*, they which are called might receive *the promise of eternal* inheritance," Heb. ix, 12–15. "Christ *died* for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should *live together with him*," 1 Thess. v, 10.

The last theory of justification to which it is necessary to advert, is that comprised in the scheme of Dr. Taylor, of Norwich, in his Key to the Apostolic Writings. It is, that all such phrases as to elect, call, adopt, justify, sanctify, &c, are to be taken to express that Church relation into which, by the destruction of the Jewish polity, believing Jews and Gentiles were brought; that they are "antecedent blessings," enjoyed by all professed Christians, though, unless they avail themselves of these privileges for the purposes of personal holiness, they cannot be saved.

This scheme is, in many respects, delusive and absurd, as it confounds collective privileges with those attainments which from their nature can only be personal. If we allow that with respect to "election," for instance, it may have a plausibility, because nations of men may be elected to peculiar privileges of a religious kind; yet with respect to the others, as "justification," &c, the notion requires no lengthened refutation. Justification is, as the Apostle Paul states it, pardon of sin; but are the sins of nations pardoned, because they are professedly Christian? This is a personal attainment, and can be no other, and collective justification, by Church privileges, is a wild dream, which mocks and trifles with the Scriptures. According to this scheme, there is a Scriptural sense in which the most profane and immoral man, provided he profess himself a Christian, may be said to be justified, that is, pardoned; sanctified, that is, made holy; and adopted, that is, made a child of God!

CHAPTER XXIV.

Benefits derived to Man from the Atonement—Concomitants of Justification.

The leading blessings concomitant with justification, are regeneration and adoption; with respect to which we may observe generally, that although we must distinguish them as being different from each other, and from justification, yet they are not to be separated. They occur at the same time, and they all enter into the experience of the same person; so that no man is justified without being regenerated and adopted, and no man is regenerated and made a son of God, who is not justified. Whenever they are mentioned in Scripture, they, therefore, involve and imply each other; a remark which may preserve us from some errors. Thus, with respect to our heirship, and consequent title to eternal life, in Titus iii, 7, it is grounded upon our *justification*. "For we are justified by his grace, that we should be *heirs* according to the hope of eternal life." In 1 Pet. i, 3, it is connected with our *regeneration*. "Blessed be God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who

ant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the of Jesus Christ from the dead, unto an inheritance," &c. Rom. viii, 17, it is grounded upon our *adoption*—"If children." These passages are a sufficient proof, that justification, and adoption, are not distinct and different titles, but e and the same title, through the gift of God in Christ, to y inheritance. They are attained, too, by the same faith. stified by faith;" and we are the "children of God by faith sus." Accordingly, in the following passages, they are all e effect of the same act of faith. "But as many as received n gave he power to become the *sons of God*, (which appella- reconciliation and adoption,) even to them that *believe* on which were *born* not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, will of man, *but of God*," or, in other words, were regene-

rvations which have been made on the subject, in the pre- ter, will render it the less necessary to dwell here at length ture and extent of regeneration.

t mighty change in man, wrought by the Holy Spirit, by ominion which sin has over him in his natural state, and plores and struggles against in his penitent state, is broken d, so that, with full choice of will and the energy of right e serves God freely, and "runs in the way of his command. Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin, for his seed a him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." "For have dominion over you; for ye are not under the law, but ." "But now being made free from sin, and become ser- d, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting verance from the bondage of sin, and the power and the ll things which are pleasing to God, both as to inward habits l acts, are, therefore, the distinctive characters of this state. entance is not regeneration, we have before observed. It ar disputing whether regeneration begins with repentance; generate state is only entered upon at our justification, then be meant by this, to be consistent with the Scriptures, is, paratory process, which leads to regeneration, as it leads to mences with conviction and contrition, and goes on to a ning to the Lord. In the order which God has established, does not take place without this process. Conviction of l danger of an unregenerate state must first be felt. God ted this change to be effected in answer to our prayers; able prayer supposes that we desire the blessing we ask; cept of Christ as the appointed medium of access to God; and confess our own inability to attain what we ask from

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tion. The regenerate state is, also, called in Scripture sanctification; though a distinction is made by the Apostle Paul between that and being "sanctified *wholly*," a doctrine to be afterward considered. In the regenerate, or sanctified state, the former corruptions of the heart may remain, and strive for the mastery; but that which characterizes and distinguishes it from the state of a penitent before justification, before he is "in Christ," is, that they are not even his inward *habit*; and that they have no *dominion*. Faith unites to Christ; by it we receive "grace and peace from God the Father, and his Son Jesus Christ," and enjoy "the communion of the Holy Ghost;" and this spirit, as the sanctifying Spirit, is given to us to "abide with us, and to be in us," and then we walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit.

Adoption is the second concomitant of justification, and is a large and comprehensive blessing.

To suppose that the apostles take this term from the practice of the Greeks, Romans, and other nations who had the custom of adopting the children of others, and investing them with all the privileges of their natural offspring, is, probably, a refinement. It is much more likely that they had simply in view the obvious fact, that our sins had deprived us of our sonship, the favour of God, and our right to the inheritance of eternal life; that we had become strangers, and aliens, and enemies; and that, upon our return to God, and reconciliation with him, our forfeited privileges were not only restored, but heightened through the paternal love of God. They could scarcely be forgetful of the affecting parable of the prodigal son; and it is under the same simple view that St. Paul quotes from the Old Testament, "wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you, and I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord almighty."

Adoption, then, is that act by which we who were alienated, and enemies, and disinherited, are made the sons of God, and heirs of his eternal glory. "If children then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ;" where it is to be remarked, that it is not in our own right, nor in right of any work done in us, or which we ourselves do, though it be an evangelical work, that we become heirs, but *jointly with him*, and in his right.

To this state belong freedom from a servile spirit; we are not servants but sons; the special love and care of God our heavenly Father; a filial confidence in him; free access to him at all times and in all circumstances; the title to the heavenly inheritance; and the Spirit of adoption, or the witness of the Holy Spirit to our adoption, which is the foundation of all the comfort we can derive from those privileges, as it is the only means by which we can know that they are ours.

The point stated last requires to be explained more largely, and the

more so as it has often been derided as enthusiastic, and often timidly explained away by those whose opinions are in the main correct.

The doctrine is, the inward witness or testimony of the Holy Spirit, to the adoption or sonship of believers, from which flows a comfortable *persuasion* or *conviction* of our present acceptance with God, and the *hope* of our future and eternal glory.

This is taught in several passages of Scripture.

Rom. viii, 15, 16, "For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God." In this passage it is to be remarked, 1. That the gift of the Spirit spoken of, takes away "*fear*," being opposed to the personified spirit of the law, or rather, perhaps, to the Holy Spirit in his convincing agency, called the spirit of bondage, producing "fear," a servile dread of God as offended. 2. That the "Spirit of God" here mentioned, is not the personified spirit or genius of the Gospel, as some would have it, but "*the Spirit itself*," or himself, and hence called in the Galatians, in the text adduced below, "*The Spirit of his Son*," which cannot mean the genius of the Gospel. 3. That he inspires a filial confidence in God as our Father, which is opposed to "the fear" produced by the "spirit of bondage." 4. That he produces this filial confidence, and enables us to call God our Father, by witnessing, bearing testimony with our spirit, "*that we are the children of God.*"

Gal. iv, 4, 5, 6, "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons; and because ye are sons God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father."

Here, also, are to be noted, 1. The means of our redemption from under (the curse of) the law, the incarnation and sufferings of Christ. 2. That the adoption of sons follows upon our actual redemption from that curse, or, in other words, our pardon. 3. That upon our pardon, the "*Spirit of his Son*" is "*sent forth*," and that "*into our hearts*," producing the same effect as that mentioned in the Epistle to the Romans, filial confidence in God,—"*crying, Abba, Father.*" To these are to be added all those passages, so numerous in the New Testament, which express the confidence and the joy of Christians; their friendship with God; their confident access to him as their God; their entire union, and delightful intercourse with him in spirit.

This doctrine has been generally termed the doctrine of assurance, and, perhaps the expressions of St. Paul,—"the full assurance of faith," and "the full assurance of hope," may warrant the use of the word. But as there is a current and generally understood sense of this term among persons of the Calvinistic persuasion, implying, that the assurance of

present acceptance and sonship, is an assurance of our final perseverance, and of our indefeasible title to heaven: the phrase, a comfortable persuasion, or conviction of our justification and adoption, arising out of the Spirit's inward and direct testimony, is to be preferred; for this has been held as an indubitable doctrine of Holy Writ by Christians, who by no means receive the doctrine of assurance in the sense held by the followers of Calvin.

There is, also, another reason for the sparing and cautious use of the term assurance, which is, that it seems to imply, though not necessarily, the absence of all doubt, and shuts out all those lower degrees of persuasion which may exist in the experience of Christians. For, as our faith, may not at first, or at all times, be equally strong, the testimony of the Spirit may have its degrees of strength, and our persuasion or conviction be proportionately regulated. Yet, if faith be genuine, God respects its weaker exercises, and encourages its growth, by affording measures of comfort, and degrees of this testimony. Nevertheless, while this is allowed, the fulness of this attainment is to be pressed upon every one that believes, according to the word of God:—"Let us draw near," says St. Paul to all Christians, "with full assurance of faith."

It may serve, also, to remove an objection sometimes made to the doctrine, and to correct an error which sometimes pervades the statement of it, to observe that this assurance, persuasion, or conviction, whichever term be adopted, is not of the essence of justifying faith; that is, that justifying faith does not consist in the assurance that I am now forgiven, through Christ. This would be obviously contradictory. For we must believe before we can be justified; much more before we can be assured, in any degree, that we are justified; and this persuasion, therefore, follows justification; and is one of its results. We believe in order to justification; but we cannot be persuaded of our forgiveness in order to it, for the persuasion would be false. But though we must not only distinguish, but separate this persuasion of our acceptance from the faith which justifies, we must not separate but only distinguish it from justification itself. With that come as concomitants, regeneration, adoption, and as far as we have any information from Scripture, the "Spirit of adoption," though, as in all other cases, in various degrees of operation.

On the subject of this testimony of the Holy Spirit there are four opinions.

The first is, that it is twofold; a direct testimony to, or "inward impression on the soul, whereby the Spirit of God witnesses to my spirit that I am a child of God; that Christ hath loved me, and given himself for me, that I, even I, am reconciled to God;" (*Wesley's Sermons;*) and an indirect testimony, arising from the work of the Spirit in the heart and life, which St. Paul calls the testimony of our own spirits; for this

is inferred from his expression, And the Spirit itself beareth witness *with* our spirit," &c. This testimony of our own spirit, or indirect testimony of the Holy Spirit by and through our own spirit, is considered as confirmatory of the first testimony, and is thus explained by the same writer:—"How am I assured that I do not mistake the voice of the Spirit? even by the testimony of my own spirit, 'by the answer of a good conscience toward God:' hereby you shall know that you are in no delusion, that you have not deceived your own soul. The immediate fruits of the Spirit ruling in the heart, are love, joy, peace; bowels of mercies, humbleness of mind, meekness, gentleness, long suffering. And the outward fruits are, the doing good to all men, and a uniform obedience to all the commands of God."

The second opinion acknowledges, also, a twofold witness; the witness of the Spirit, which consists in the moral effects produced in him that believes, otherwise called the fruits of the Spirit; and the witness of our own spirits, that is, the consciousness of possessing faith. This they call "the reflex act of faith, by which a person, conscious of believing, reasons in this manner, I know that I believe in Christ, therefore I know that I shall obtain everlasting life." (*Dr. Hill's Lectures.*)

The third opinion is, that there is but one witness, the Holy Spirit, acting concurrently with our own spirits. "The Spirit of God produces those graces in us which are the evidence of our adoption; it is he who, as occasion requires, illuminates our understandings and assists our memories in discovering and recollecting those arguments of hope and comfort within ourselves. But God's Spirit doth witness with, not without our spirits and understandings; in making use of our reason in considering and reflecting upon those grounds of comfort, which the Spirit of God hath wrought in us, and from them drawing this comfortable conclusion to ourselves, that 'we are the sons of God.'" (*Bishop Bull.*) With this notion is generally connected, that of the entire imperceptibility of the Spirit's operations as distinguished from the operations of our own mind, "so that we could never have known, unless it had been communicated to us by Divine revelation, that our souls are moved by a Divine power, when we love God and keep his commandments." (*Mant and D'Oyley's Commentary.*)

The following passage from the Rev. Thomas Scott's Commentary agrees with Bishop Bull in making the witness of the Spirit mediate through our own spirit; and differs chiefly in phraseology. It may be taken as the view of a great part of those called the evangelical clergy of the present day. "The Holy Spirit, by producing in believers the tempers and affections of children, as described in the Scriptures, most manifestly attests their adoption into God's family. This is not done by any voice, immediate revelation, or impulse, or merely by any text brought to the mind, (for all these are equivocal and delusory,) but by

coinciding with the testimony of their own consciences, as to their uprightness in embracing the Gospel, and giving themselves up to the service of God. So that, while they are examining themselves as to the reality of their conversion, and find Scriptural evidence of it, the Holy Spirit, from time to time shines upon his own work, excites their holy affections into lively exercise, renders them very efficacious upon their conduct, and thus puts the matter beyond doubt; for while they feel the spirit of dutiful children toward God, they become satisfied concerning his paternal love to them."

A fourth opinion allows the direct witness of the Spirit, as stated above; but considers it only the special privilege of a few favoured persons; of which notion it is a sufficient refutation, that the apostle, in the texts before quoted, speaks generally of believers, and restrains not the attainment from any who seek it. He places it in this respect on the ground of all other blessings of the new covenant.

Of the four opinions just adduced, the first only appears to express the true sense of the word of God; but that the subject may be fully exhibited, we may observe, 1. That by all sober divines it is allowed, that some comfortable persuasions, or, at least, hope of the Divine favour, is attainable by true Christians, and is actually possessed by them, except under the influence of bodily infirmities, and in peculiar seasons of temptation, and that all true faith is, in some degree, (though to what extent they differ,) personal and appropriating.

"The third part of repentance is faith, whereby we do apprehend and take hold upon the promises of God, touching the free pardon and forgiveness of our sins; which promises are sealed up unto us, with the death and blood shedding of his Son Jesus Christ. For what should it avail and profit us to be sorry for our sins, to lament and bewail that we have offended our most bounteous and merciful Father, or to confess and acknowledge our offences and trespasses, though it be done never so earnestly, unless we do steadfastly believe, and be fully persuaded, that God, for his Son Jesus Christ's sake, will forgive us all our sins, and put them out of remembrance and from his sight? Therefore, they that teach repentance without a lively faith in our Saviour Jesus Christ, do teach none other but Judas's repentance." (*Homily on Repentance.*)

"Faith is not merely a speculative but a practical acknowledgment of Jesus as the Christ,—an *effort and motion of the mind toward God;* when the sinner, convinced of sin, accepts with thankfulness the proffered terms of pardon, and in humble confidence applying individually to himself the benefit of the general atonement, in the elevated language of a venerable father of the Church, drinks of the stream which flows from the Redeemer's side. The effect is, that in a little, he is filled with that perfect love of God which casteth out fear,—he cleaves to God with the entire affection of the soul." (*Bishop Horsley.*)

"It is the property of saving faith, that it hath a force to appropriate, and make Christ our own. Without this, a general remote belief would have been cold comfort. 'He loved *me*, and gave himself for *me*,' saith St. Paul. What saith St. Chrysostom? 'Did Christ die only for St. Paul? No; *non excludit, sed appropriat*;' he excludes not others, but he will secure himself." (*Bishop Brownrigg.*)

2. By those who admit, that upon previous contrition and faith in Christ, an act of justification takes place, by which we are reconciled to God, and adopted into his family, a doctrine which has been Scripturally established; it must also be admitted, that this act of mercy on the part of God is entirely kept secret from us, or that, by some means, it is made knowable by us. If the former, there is no remedy at all for doubt, and fear, and tormenting anticipation, which must be great, in proportion as our repentance is deep and genuine; and so there can be no comfort, no freedom, no cheerfulness of spirit in religion, which contradicts the sentiments of all Churches, and all their leading theologians. What is still more important, it contradicts the Scriptures.

To all true believers, the Almighty is represented as the "God of peace and consolation;" as "a Father;" as "dwelling in them and walking in them." Nay, there is a marked distinction between the assurances of grace and favour made to penitents, and to believers. The declarations as to the former are highly consolatory; but they constantly refer to some future good designed for them by the God before whom they humble themselves, for the encouragement of their seeking prayers, and their efforts of trust. "To that man will *I look*, (a Hebraism for showing favour,) saith the Lord, who is poor, and of a contrite spirit." The "weary and heavy laden" are invited to Christ, that he may "give rest unto their souls." The apostles exhorted men to repent and be baptized, in order to the remission of sins. But to all who, in the Christian sense, are believers, or who have the faith by which we are justified, the language is much higher. "We have peace with God." "We joy in God by whom we have received the atonement." They are exhorted "to rejoice in the Lord always." "The spirit of bondage" is exchanged for "the Spirit of adoption." They are "Christ's." They are "children, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ." They "rejoice in hope of the glory of God." They are "always confident, knowing, that while at home in the body, they are absent from the Lord, but that when absent from the body, they shall be present with the Lord."

3. If then we come to know that this great act of forgiveness has taken place in our favour; that it is vouchsafed to us in particular, and know this with that degree of conviction, which lays a sufficient ground of comfort and joy, the simple question is, by what means the knowledge of this is attained by us? The general promise of pardon alone

is, in all the schemes just stated, acknowledged to be insufficient for this purpose; for since that promise is suspended upon conditions, they all profess to explain the means by which we may conclude that we are actually and personally interested in the benefit of the general promise, the conditions being on our part personally fulfilled. The first opinion attributes this to a double testimony, a direct one of the Holy Spirit to our minds, and an indirect one of the same Spirit, through our own minds, and founded upon his moral work in them: or, what is the same thing, the testimony of our own spirit. This twofold testimony we think clearly established by the texts above quoted. For the first, "the Spirit itself," and the "Spirit of his Son," is manifestly the Spirit of God: his office is to give testimony, and the object of the testimony is to declare that we are the sons of God. When also the apostle in Romans viii, 16, says that this Spirit bears witness "*with*" our spirit, he makes our own minds witnesses with him to the same fact, though in a different manner. For though some writers will have the compound to be used here for the simple form of the verb, and render it "to witness to our spirit;" and instances of this use of the compound verb do occur in the New Testament; yet it agrees both with the literal rendering of the word, and with other passages to conjoin this testimony of the Holy Spirit with those confirmatory proofs of our adoption which arise from his work within us, and which may, upon examination of our state, be called the testimony of our own mind or conscience. To this testimony the Apostle Paul refers in the same chapter, "They that are after the Spirit, (do mind) the things of the Spirit." "But ye are not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of Christ dwell in you: now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his; for as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." And again, in Galatians, "But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law." "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy," &c.

4. Two witnesses, and a twofold testimony is then sufficiently established; but the main consideration is, whether the Holy Spirit gives his testimony directly to the mind, by impression, suggestion, or by whatever other term it may be called, or mediately by our own spirits, in some such way as is described by Bishop Bull in the extract above given; by "illuminating our understandings and assisting our memories in discussing and recollecting those arguments of hope and comfort within ourselves," which arise from "the graces which he has produced in us;" or, as it is expressed by Mr. Scott, by "shining upon his own work, exciting their affections into lively exercise, rendering them very efficacious upon their conduct," and "thus puts the matter beyond doubt, for while they feel the spirit of dutiful children toward God, they become satisfied concerning his paternal love to them."

To this statement of the doctrine we object, that it makes the testi-

mony of the Holy Spirit in point of fact but the testimony of our own spirit; and by holding but *one* witness contradicts St. Paul, who, as we have seen, holds *two*. For the testimony is that of our own consciousness of certain moral changes which have taken place; no other is admitted; and therefore it is but one testimony. Nor is the Holy Spirit brought in at all, except to qualify our own spirit to give witness by assisting its "discernment and memory," according to Bishop Bull, and by "shining upon his own work," according to Mr. Scott; and so there is but one witness, and that ourselves: for though another may assist a witness to prepare and arrange his evidence, there is still but one deposition, and but one deposer. This is made still stronger, since it is supposed by both these writers, that there is no impression or revelation from the Spirit of the fact of our adoption, and that he does not in any way which we may distinguish from the operation of our own minds, assist us to prepare this evidence; for if this assistance, or shining upon his own work, could be ascertained to be from him *distinctly*, and with *intention* to assure us from these moral changes that we are adopted into the family of God, then an immediate collateral impression or revelation would be supposed, which both reject. It follows, therefore, that we have no other ground to conclude those "graces and virtues" which we discern in ourselves to be the work of the Spirit, than the *general* one, that all good in man is of his production, and our repentance and contrition might as well, on this general ground, be concluded to be the evidence of pardon, although they arise from our consciousness of guilt, and our need of pardon. The argument of this opinion, simply and in fact, is, that the Holy Spirit works moral changes in the heart, and that these are the evidence of our sonship. It goes not beyond this; the Holy Spirit is not excluded by this opinion as the source of good in man, he is not excluded as qualifying our minds to adduce evidence as to certain changes being wrought within us; but he is excluded as a witness, although he is said so explicitly by the apostle to give witness to the fact, not of a moral change, but of our adoption.

5. But farther, suppose our minds to be so assisted by the Holy Spirit as to discern the reality of his work in us; and in an investigation, whether we are or are not accepted of God, pardoned by his mercy, and adopted into his family, we depose this as the evidence of it; to what degree must this work of the Spirit in us have advanced before it can be evidence of this fact? We have seen that it were absurd to allege contrition, and penitence, and fear, as the proofs of our pardon, since they suppose, that we are still under condemnation; what farther work of the Spirit, then, is the proof? The reply to this usually is, that though repentance should not be evidence of pardon, yet, when faith is added, this becomes evidence, since God has declared in his word, that we are "justified by faith," and "whosoever believeth shall be saved."

To this we reply, that though we should become conscious of both repentance and faith, either by "a reflex act of our own minds," or by the assistance of the Spirit "shining upon his own work," this would be no evidence of our forgiveness; our spirit would, in that case, witness the fact of our repenting and believing, but that would be no witness to the fact of our adoption. Justification is an act of God; it is secret and invisible; it passes in his own mind; it is declared by no outward sign; and no one can know, except the Holy Spirit, who knows the mind of God, whether we are pardoned or not, unless it had been stated in his word, that in every case pardon is dispensed when repentance and faith have reached some definite degree, clearly pointed out, so that we cannot fail to ascertain that they have reached that degree; and, also, unless we were expressly authorized to be ourselves the judges of this case, and confidently and comfortably to conclude our justification. For it is not enough that we have faith. Faith, both as assent and confidence, has every possible degree; it is capable of mixture with doubt, and self dependence; nor without some definite and particular character being assigned to justifying faith, could we ever, with any confidence, conclude as to our own. But we have no such particular description of faith; nor are we authorized, any where, to make ourselves the judges of the fact, whether the act of pardon, as to us, has passed the mind of God. The apostle, in the passages quoted above, has assigned that office to the Holy Spirit; but it is in no part of Scripture appointed to us.

If, then, we have no authority from God to conclude that we are pardoned when faith, in an uncertain degree, is added to repentance, the whole becomes a matter of *inference;* and we argue, that having "repentance and faith," we are forgiven; in other words, that these are the sufficient evidences of pardon. But repentance and faith are exercised IN ORDER to pardon; that must, therefore, be subsequent to both, and they cannot, for that reason, be the evidence of it, or the evidence of pardon might be enjoyed before pardon is actually received, which is absurd. But it has been said, "that we have the testimony of God in his word, that when repentance and faith exist, God has infallibly connected pardon with them from the moment they are perceived to exist, and so it may be *surely* inferred from them." The answer is, that we have no such testimony. We have, through the mercy of God, the promise of pardon to all who repent and believe; but repentance is not pardon, and faith is not pardon, but they are its prerequisites; each is a *sine quâ non*, but surely not the pardon itself, nor, as we have just seen, can either be considered the evidence of pardon, without an absurdity. They are means to that end; but nothing more: and though God has "infallibly connected" the blessing of pardon with repentance and faith, he has not connected it with *any kind* of repentance, nor with

any kind of faith; nor with *every degree* of repentance, nor with every *degree* of faith. How then shall we ever know, whether *our* repentance and faith are accepted unless pardon actually follow them? And as this pardon cannot be attested by them, for the reason above given, and must, therefore, have an attestation of higher authority, and of a distinct kind, the only attestation conceivable which remains, is the direct witness of the Holy Spirit. Either this must be acknowledged, or a painful uncertainty as to the *genuineness* or the required *measure* and *degree* of our repentance and faith, quite destructive of "comfort," must remain throughout life.

6. But if neither our repentance, nor even a consciousness of faith, when joined with it, can be the evidence of the fact of our adoption: it has been urged, that when all those graces, which are called the fruits of the Spirit, are found in our experience, they, at least, must be sufficient evidence of the fact, without supposing a more direct testimony of the Holy Spirit. The "fruits" thus referred to, are those enumerated by St. Paul in his Epistle to the Galatians. "But the fruit of the Spirit, is love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness," &c. Two things will here be granted, and they greatly strengthen the argument for a direct testimony of the Holy Spirit:—that these fruits are found only in those who have been received, by the remission of their sins, into the Divine favour; and that they are fruits of the Spirit of adoption. The first is proved from the connection of the words which follow: "And they that ARE CHRIST'S have crucified the flesh," &c. For to be "Christ's," and to be "*in Christ*," are phrases, with the apostle, equivalent to being in a state of justification:—"There is no condemnation to them that are *in Christ Jesus*." The second is proved by the connection of the words with verse 18, "But if ye be led by the Spirit, ye are not under the law," for these words are exactly parallel to chap. iv. 5, 6, "To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons; and because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." These are, then, the fruits following upon a state of pardon, adoption, and our receiving the Spirit of adoption. We allow that they presuppose pardon; but then they as clearly presuppose the Spirit of adoption, "sent forth into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father;" that is, they not only presuppose our pardon, but pardon previously attested and made known to us; the persuasion of which conveyed to the mind, not by them, but by the Spirit of adoption, is the foundation of them; at least, of that "love, joy, and peace," which are mentioned first, and must not be separated, in the argument, from the other. Nor can these "fruits" result from any thing but manifested pardon; they cannot themselves manifest our pardon, for they cannot exist till it is manifested. If we "love God," it is because we know him as God reconciled; if we have "joy in God," it is because

"we have received the reconciliation;" if we have peace, it is because "being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ." God, conceived of as angry, cannot be the object of filial love; pardon unfelt, supposes guilt and fear still to burden the mind, and guilt and "joy" and "peace" cannot exist. But by the argument of those who make these the *media* of ascertaining the fact of our forgiveness and adoption, we must be supposed to love God, while yet we feel him to be angry with us; to rejoice and have peace, while the fearful apprehensions of the consequences of unremitted sin are not removed; and if this is impossible, then the ground of our love, and joy, and peace, is pardon revealed and witnessed, directly and immediately by the Spirit of adoption.

It has been said, indeed, that love to God may be produced from a consideration of God's *general love* to mankind in his Son, and that, therefore, the force of the above argument is broken; but we reply, that, in Scripture, Christians are spoken of as "reconciled to God;" as "translated into the kingdom of his dear Son;" as "children," "heirs," &c; and, correspondently with these relations, their love is spoken of as love to God as *their Father*,—love to God as *their God* in covenant, who calls himself "their God," and them "his people." This is the love of God exhibited in the New Testament; and the question is, whether such a love of God as this can spring from a knowledge of his "*general* love to man," or whether it arises, under the Spirit's influence, from a persuasion of his pardoning love to us "*individually*." To clear this, we may divide those who hear the Gospel, or Christians by profession, into the following classes:—the carnal and careless;—the despairing;—the penitent, who seek God with hope as well as desire, now discouraged by their fears, and sunk under their load of conscious guilt, and again encouraged by a degree of hope;—and, lastly, those who are "justified by faith, and have peace with God." The first class know God's "general love to man;" but it will not be pleaded that they love him.—The second know the "general love of God to man;" but, thinking themselves exceptions from his mercy, cannot love him on that account.—The third admit the same "general love of God to man," and it is the foundation of their *hope;* but does this produce love? The view of his *mercy* in the gift of his Son, and in the general promise, may produce a degree of this emotion, or perhaps more properly of *gratitude;* but do they love his *justice*, under the condemnation of which they feel themselves; and his *holiness*, the awful purity of which makes them afraid? If not, they do not love God as God; that is, as a whole, in all his perfections, the awful as well as the attractive, the alarming as well as the encouraging; which is, doubtless, the character of the love of those who are justified by faith. But, leaving this nicer distinction, the main question is, do they love him as a *Father*, as their God in covenant; with

[illegible] leads up the affections of "peace and joy," as well as [illegible], gentleness, and fidelity?"—for in this company, so to speak, [illegible] places this grace, where it is a "fruit of the Spirit,"—"the [illegible] that *believed* on him should receive." This is impos[illegible] [illegible] seeking, though hoping penitents, do not regard God as [illegible] in that special sense in which the word is correlative "to [illegible] and heirs;"—they do not regard him as their God in that cove[illegible] which says, "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their [illegible] and iniquities I will remember no more; and I will be to them a [illegible], and they shall be to me a people." This is what they seek, but [illegible] not found; and they cannot love God under relations in which they know, and painfully feel, that he does not yet stand to them. They know [illegible] "general love to *man*," but not his pardoning love to *them*; and therefore cannot love him as reconciled to them by the death of his Son. It follows, therefore, that the last class only, the "justified by faith," bear *that* love to God, which is marked by the characters impressed upon it by the apostles. He is their Father, and they love him as his children: he is their God in covenant; and, as they can, in this appropriating sense, call him *their God*, they love him *correspondently*, though not *adequately*. Their love, therefore, rests upon their persuasion of their *personal* and *individual* interest in his pardoning, adopting, and covenant-fulfilling mercy to *them*; and where these benefits are not personally enjoyed, *this kind* of love to God cannot exist. This, then, we think sufficiently establishes the fact, that the Scriptures of the New Testament, when speaking of the love of believers to God, always suppose that it arises from a persuasion of God's special love to them as *individuals*, and not merely from a knowledge of his "*general* love" to mankind.

Others there are who, in adverting to these fruits of the Spirit, overlook "love, joy, and peace," and fix their attention only on "gentleness, goodness, meekness, fidelity, and temperance," as those graces which make up our practical *holiness*, and thus argue justification from regeneration, which is an unquestionable concomitant of it. The reply to this is, that the fruit of the Spirit is *undivided*; that all attempts at separating it are, therefore, criminal and delusive; and that where there is not "love, joy, and peace," we have no Scriptural reason to conclude that there is *that* gentleness, *that* goodness, *that* meekness, &c, of which the apostle speaks, or, in other words, that there is that state of regeneration which the Scriptures describe; at least not ordinarily, for we leave seasons of deep spiritual exercise, and cases of physical depression, to be treated according to their merits. Thus this argument falls to the ground. But the same conclusion is reached in another way. Persons of this opinion would infer forgiveness from holiness; but holiness consists in habits and acts of which *love to God* is the principle, for we first "love

God," and then "keep his commandments." Holiness then is preceded by love as its root, and that, as we have seen, by manifested pardon. For this love is the love of a pardoned sinner to God as a Father, as a God in actual covenant, offered on one part, and accepted on the other; and it exists before holiness, as the principle exists before the act and the habit. In the process then of inferring our justified state from moral changes, if we find what we think holiness without love, it is the holiness of a Pharisee without principle. If we join to it the love which is supposed to be capable of springing from God's general love to man, this is a principle of which Scripture takes no cognizance, and which at best, if it exist at all, must be a very mixed and defective sentiment, and cannot originate a holiness like that which distinguishes the "*new creature.*" It is not, therefore, a warrantable evidence of either regeneration or justification. But if we find love to God as a God reconciled; as a Father; as a God who "loves us;" it is plain that, as this love is the root of holiness, it precedes it: and we must consider God under these lovely relations on some other evidence than "the testimony of our own spirits," which evidence can be no other than that of the Spirit of God.

Thus it is established, that the witness of the Spirit is direct and not mediate; and the following extracts will show that this is no new or unsanctioned doctrine. Luther "was strengthened by the discourse of an old Augustine monk, concerning the certainty we may have that our sins are forgiven. God likewise gave him much comfort in his temptations, by that saying of St. Bernard, 'It is necessary to believe, first of all, that you cannot have forgiveness but by the mercy of God; and next, that through his mercy, *thy* sins are forgiven *thee.*' This is the witness which the Holy Spirit bears in thy heart, '*Thy* sins are forgiven *thee.*' And thus it is, that according to the apostle, a man is justified freely through faith." (*Life of Martin Luther, by John Daniel Hermchmid.*)

"In the 88th Psalm is contained the prayer of one, who, although he felt in himself that he had not only man, but also God angry toward him; yet he by prayer humbly resorted unto God, as the only port of consolation; and, in the midst of his desperate state of trouble, put the hope of his salvation in him whom he felt his enemy. Howbeit, no man of himself can do this, but the Spirit of God that striketh man's heart with fear, prayeth for the man stricken and feared, with unspeakable groanings. And when you feel yourself, and know any other oppressed after such sort, be glad; for after that God hath made you know what you be of yourself, *he will doubtless show you comfort, and declare unto you what you be in Christ his only Son;* and use prayer often, for that is the means whereby God will be sought unto for his gifts." (*Bishop Hooper. See Fox's Acts and Monuments.*)

"It is the proper effect of the blood of Christ to cleanse our consciences from dead works to serve the living God; which, if we find it doth, Christ is come to us as he is to come; and the Spirit is come, and puts his *teste*, (witness.) And if we have his *teste*, we may go our way in peace; we have kept a right feast to him, and to the memory of his coming. Even so come, Lord Jesus, and come, *O blessed Spirit, and bear witness to our spirit that Christ's water, and his blood, we have our part in both;* both in the fountain opened for sin and uncleanness, and in the blood of the New Testament, the legacy whereof is everlasting life in thy kingdom of glory." (*Bishop Andrew. Sermon of the sending of the Holy Ghost.*)

"The Spirit which God hath given us to assure us that we are the sons of God, to enable us to call upon him as our Father." (*Hooker. Sermon of Certainty of Faith.*)

"Unto you, because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, to the end ye might know that Christ hath built you upon a rock immovable, that he hath registered your names in the book of life." (*Hooker. Sermon on Jude.*)

"From adoption flows all Christians' joy; for the Spirit of adoption is, first, a *witness*, Rom. viii, 16; second, a seal, Eph. iv, 30; third, the pledge and earnest of our inheritance, Eph. i, 14, setting a holy security on the soul, whereby it rejoiceth even in affliction, in hope of glory." (*Archbishop Usher. Sum and Substance of Christian Religion.*)

"This is one great office of the Holy Ghost, to ratify and seal up to us the forgiveness of our sins. 'In whom, after ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise,'" &c. (*Bishop Brownrigg's Sermon on Whitsunday.*)

"It is the office of the Holy Ghost to assure us of the adoption of sons, to create in us a sense of the paternal love of God toward us, to give us an earnest of our everlasting inheritance. *The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God are the sons of God.* And *because we are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father. For we have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but we have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.* As, therefore, we are born again by the Spirit, and receive from him our regeneration, so we are also *assured by the same Spirit of our adoption;* and because being sons, we are also *heirs, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ*, by the same Spirit we have the pledge, or rather the earnest of our inheritance. *For he which establisheth us in Christ, and hath anointed us in God, who hath also sealed us, and hath given us the earnest of his Spirit in our hearts; so that we are sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is*

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t; for we know not what passes in the mind of the invisible
annot give *indirect* evidence of the fact; for no moral
which our spirits can be conscious, have been stated in
the proofs of our pardon; they prove that there is a work
r hearts, but they are not proofs of our actual forgiveness.
rits are competent witnesses that such moral effects have

[illegible] character, as it is the office of [illegible] therefore, the reality of the [illegible] in us. That competent and [illegible] that God is become our Father [illegible] the comfort which arises from [illegible] operation within us, accompanying, [illegible] making us new creatures in Christ [illegible] in no delusion as to the witness [illegible] the Spirit of God.

[illegible] subject entertained by divines, the [illegible] the Scriptures, and ought, therefore, to [illegible] The second opinion is refuted in our examination [illegible] called "the reflex act of faith," is only a [illegible] which we have shown must be exercised [illegible] be an evidence of it. The third opinion [illegible] its parts, except the reference to "voices [illegible] from Scott's Commentary, which appears [illegible] and enthusiasm. To this we may reply, that [illegible] is revealed to man by the Holy Spirit, it [illegible] and inexplicable operation, producing clear [illegible] that God is reconciled; that "our iniquities [illegible] covered." The fourth opinion was refuted [illegible]

CHAPTER XXV.

Extent of the Atonement.

[illegible] spoken of some of the leading blessings derived to [illegible] of Christ, and the conditions on which they are [illegible] Before the remainder are adduced, it may be here [illegible] into the extent of that atonement for sin made [illegible] Saviour, and whether the blessings of justification [illegible] adoption, are rendered attainable by all to whom [illegible]

[illegible] us into what is called the Calvinistic controversy [illegible] has always been conducted with great ardour, and [illegible] intemperance. I shall endeavour to consider such parts [illegible] comprehended in the question before us, with perfect calm[illegible] recollecting, on the one hand, how many excellent [illegible] have been arranged on each side; and, on the other, [illegible] is due to great names, the plain and unsophisticated [illegible] of inspired truth must alone decide on a subject with [illegible] is not silent.

In the system usually called by the name of Calvinism, and which shall subsequently be exhibited in its different modifications, there are, I think, many great errors; but they have seldom been held except in connection with a class of vital truths. By many writers who have attacked this system, the truth which it contains, as well as the error, has often been invaded; and the assault itself has been not unfrequently conducted on principles exceedingly anti-scriptural, and fatally delusive. These considerations are sufficient to inspire caution. The controversy is a very voluminous one; and yet no great dexterity is required to exhibit it with clearness in a comparatively small compass. Its essence lies in very limited bounds; and, according to the plan of this work, the whole question will be tested, first and chiefly, by Scriptural authority. High Calvinism, indeed, affects the mode of reasoning *à priori*, and delights in metaphysics. To some also it gives most delight to see it opposed on the same ground; and to such disputants it will be much less imposing to resort primarily, and with all simplicity, to the testimony of the sacred writings. "It is sometimes complained," says one, "that the mind is unduly biassed in its judgment, by a continual reference to the authority of the Scriptures. The complaint is just, if the Scriptures are not the word of God: but if they are, there is an opposite and corresponding danger to be guarded against, that of suffering the mind to be unduly biassed in the study and interpretation of the revealed will of God, by the deductions of unaided reason." (*Dr. Whiteley's Essays.*)

With respect to the controversy, we may also observe, that it forms a clear case of appeal to the Scriptures: for to whom the benefits of Christ's death are extended, whether to the whole of our race, or to a part, can be matter of revelation only; and the sole province of reason is that of interpreting, with fairness, and consistently with the acknowledged principles of that revelation, those parts of it in which the subject is directly or incidentally introduced.

The question before us, put into its most simple form, is, whether our Lord Jesus Christ did so die for all men, as to make salvation attainable [illegible] all men; and the affirmative of this question is, we think, the doc[illegible]e of Scripture.

We assume that this is plainly expressed,

1. In all those passages which declare that Christ died "*for* all men," and speak of his death as an atonement for the sins "*of the whole world.*"

We have already seen, in treating of our Lord's atonement, in what sense the phrase, to die "*for* us," must be understood; that it signifies to die in the place and stead of man, as a sacrificial oblation, by which satisfaction is made for the sins of the individual, so that they become remissible upon the terms of the evangelical covenant. When, there-

fore, it is said, that Christ "by the grace of God tasted death *for* every man;" and that "he is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also *for the sins* of the whole world;" it can only, we think, be fairly concluded from such declarations, and from many other familiar texts, in which the same phraseology is employed, that, by the death of Christ, the sins of every man are rendered remissible, and that salvation is consequently attainable by every man. Again, our Lord calls himself "the Saviour of *the world*;" and is, by St. Paul, called "the Saviour of *all men*." John the Baptist points him out as "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of *the world*;" and our Lord himself declares, "God so loved *the world*, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that *whosoever* believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life: for God sent not his Son into *the world* to condemn *the world*, but that *the world* through him might be saved." So, also the Apostle Paul, "God was in Christ, reconciling *the world* unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them."

2. In those passages which attribute an equal extent to the effects of the death of Christ as to the effects of the fall of our first parents: "For if through the offence of one *many* be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto *many*." "Therefore, as by the offence of one judgment came upon *all men* to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon *all men* unto justification of life." (1)

As the unlimited extent of Christ's atonement to all mankind, is plainly expressed in the above-cited passages, so is it, we also assume, necessarily *implied*,

1. In those which declare that Christ died not only for those that are

(1) To these might be added all those passages which ascribe the abolition of bodily death to Christ, who, in this respect, repairs the effect of the transgression of Adam, which he could only do in consequence of having redeemed that body from the power of the grave. This argument may be thus stated. It is taught in Scripture, that *all* shall rise from the dead. It is equally clear from the same authority, that all shall rise in consequence of the mediatorial position of Christ, the second Adam, the representative and Redeemer of mankind —"as in Adam *all* die, even so in Christ shall *all* be made alive." It follows, therefore, that if the wicked are raised from the dead, it is in consequence of the power which Christ, as Redeemer, acquired over them, and of his right in them. That this resurrection is to them a curse, was not in the purpose of God, but arises from their wilful rejection of the Gospel. To be restored to life is in itself a good; that it is turned to an evil is their own fault; and if they are not raised from the dead in consequence of Christ's right in them, acquired by *purchase*, it behooves those of a different opinion to show under what other constitution than that of the Gospel a resurrection of the body is provided for. The original law contains no intimation of this, nor of a general judgment, which latter supposes a suspension of the sentence inconsistent with the strictly legal penalty, "*in the day* thou eatest thereof thou shalt *surely* die."

saved, but for those who do, or may perish; so that it cannot be argued, from the actual condemnation of men, that they were excepted from many actual, and from all the offered, benefits of his death. "And through thy knowledge shall thy weak brother perish, *for whom Christ died.*" "Destroy not him with thy meat, *for whom Christ died.*" "False teachers, who privily shall bring in *damnable* heresies, even denying the Lord *that bought them*, and bring upon *themselves* swift *destruction.*" So also in the case of the apostates mentioned in the Epistle to the Hebrews, "Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, *wherewith he was sanctified*, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?" If any dispute should here arise as to the phrase, "wherewith he was sanctified," reference may be made to chap. vi, of the same epistle, where the same class of persons, whose doom is pronounced to be inevitable, are said to have been "once enlightened;" to have "tasted of the heavenly gift;" to have been "made partakers of the Holy Ghost;" to have "tasted the good word of God," and "the powers of the world to come:" all which expressions show that they were placed on the same ground with other Christians as to their interest in the new covenant,—a point to which we shall again recur.

2. In all those passages which make it the duty of men to believe the Gospel; and place them under guilt, and the penalty of death, for rejecting it. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but *the wrath of God* abideth on him." "But these are written, that *ye might believe* that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name." "He that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only-begotten Son of God." "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, *shall be damned.*" "How shall we escape if *we neglect* so great salvation?" "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ." The plain argument from all such passages is, that the Gospel is commanded to be preached to all men; that it is preached to them that they may believe in Christ, its Author; that this faith is required of them, in order to their salvation,—"that believing ye may have life through his name;" that they have power thus to believe to their salvation; (from whatever source, or by whatever means this power is derived to them, need not now be examined: it is plainly supposed; for not to believe, is reckoned to them as a capital crime, for which they are condemned already, and reserved to final condemnation;)

and that having power to believe, they have the power to obtain salvation, which, as it can be bestowed only through the merits of Christ's sacrifice, proves that it extends to them. The same conclusion, also follows from the nature of that faith, which is required by the Gospel in order to salvation. This, we have already seen, is not mere assent to the doctrine of Christ's sacrificial death, but personal trust in it as our atonement; which those, surely, could not be required by a God of truth to exercise, if that atonement did not embrace them. Nor could they be guilty for refusing to trust in that which was never intended to be the object of their trust; for if God so designed to exclude them from Christ, he could not command *them* to trust in Christ; and if they are not commanded thus to trust in Christ, they do not violate any command by not believing; and, in this respect, are innocent.

3. In all those passages in which men's failure to obtain salvation is placed to the account of their own opposing wills, and made wholly their own fault. "How often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and *ye would not!*" "And *ye will not come to me* that ye *may have* life." "Bringing *upon themselves* swift destruction." "Whosoever *will*, let him take of the water of life freely." It is useless here to multiply quotations, since the New Testament so constantly exhorts men to come to Christ, reproves them for neglect, and threatens them with the penal consequences of their own folly: thus uniformly placing the bar to their salvation, just where Christ places it, in his parable of the supper, in the perverseness of those, who having been *bidden* to the feast, *would* not come. From these premises, then, it follows, that since the Scriptures always attribute the ruin of men's souls to their own will, and not to the will of God; we ought to seek for no other cause of their condemnation. We can know nothing on this subject but what God has revealed. He has declared that it is not his will that men should perish: on the contrary, "He willeth all men to be saved;" and therefore commands us to pray for "all men;" he has declared, that the reason they are not saved, is not that Christ did not die for them, but that they will not come to him for the "life" which he died to procure for "the world;" and it must therefore be concluded, that the sole bar to the salvation of all who are lost is in themselves, and not in any such limitation of Christ's redemption, as supposes that they were not comprehended in its efficacy and intention.

It will now be necessary for us to consider what those who have adopted a different opinion have to urge against these plain and liberal declarations of Scripture. It is their burthen, that they are compelled to explain these passages in a more limited and qualified sense, than the letter of them and its obvious meaning teaches: and that they must do this by inference merely; for it is not even pretended that there is any

ever to be adduced, which declares as literally, that Christ *did* r the salvation of all, as those which declare that he did so die. e no passages, therefore, to examine, which, in their clear aning, stand opposed to those which we have quoted, so as to pparent contradictions which require to be reconciled by con n one side or the other. This is at least, *prima facie*, strongly r of those who hold that, in the same sense, and with the same Jesus Christ tasted death for every man."

first class of texts it is objected, that the terms "*all men*," and *ll*," are sometimes used in Scripture in a limited sense.

ay be granted, without injury to the argument drawn from the question. But though in Scripture, as in common language, *all* y, and such universals, are occasionally used with limitation e connection prevents any misunderstanding; yet they are, less, strictly universal terms, and are most frequently used as The true question is, whether, in the places above cited, they nderstood except in the largest sense; whether "all men," world," can be interpreted of the elect only, that is of some ll countries.

ay very confidently deny this,—

ause the universal sense of the terms, "all," and "all men," ry man," is confirmed, either by the context of the passages they occur, or by other scriptures. When Isaiah says, "All heep have gone astray; and the Lord hath laid on him the of us all;" he affirms that the iniquity of all those who have ay, was laid on Christ. When St. Paul says, "We thus judge, e died for all, then were all dead;" he argues the universality al death, from the universality of the means adopted for raising iritual life: a plain proof that it was received as an undisputed in the primitive Church, that Christ's dying for all men was to in its utmost latitude, or it could not have been made the basis ument. When the same apostle calls Christ the "Saviour of all especially of those that believe," he manifestly includes both and unbelievers, that is, all mankind, in the term "all men;" ares, that Christ is their Saviour, though the full benefits of his are received through faith only by them that believe. When declares that, "As by the offence of one, judgment came upon o condemnation; EVEN so by the righteousness of one, the free upon all men, (εις,) in order to justification of life;" the force mparison is lost if the term "all men," is not taken in its full for the apostle is thus made to say, AS by the offence of one, t came upon ALL MEN; EVEN so by the righteousness of one, gift came upon A FEW MEN. Nor can it be objected that the es the terms, "many," and "all men," indiscriminately in this

chapter; for there is in this no contradiction, and the objection is in our favour. All men are many, though many are not in every case all. But the term, "many," is taken by him in the sense of all, as appears from the following parallels: "death passed upon *all men*;" "*many* be dead;" "the gift by grace hath abounded unto *many*;" "the free gift came upon *all men*." "By one man's disobedience *many* were made (constituted) sinners," made liable to death; "so by the obedience of one shall *many* be made (constituted) righteous." On the last passage we may observe that "many," or "the many," must mean all men in the first clause; nor is it to be restricted in the second, as though by being "made righteous," actual, personal justification were to be understood; for the apostle is not speaking of believers individually, but of mankind collectively, and the opposite conditions in which *the race* itself is placed by the offence of Adam and the obedience of Christ in all its generations.

It is equally impracticable to restrict the phrases, "the world," "the whole world," and to paraphrase them the "world of the elect:" and yet there is no other alternative; for either "the whole world" means those elected out of it; or else Christ died in an equal sense for every man. "God so loved *the world*, that he gave his only-begotten Son," &c. Here, if the world mean not the elect only, but every man, then every man was "so loved" by God, that he gave his own Son for his redemption. To say that the world, in a few places, means the Roman empire, and in others Judea, is nothing to the purpose, unless it were meant to affirm, that the elect were the people of Judea, or those of the Roman empire only. It proves, it is true, a hyperbolical use of the term in both instances; but this cannot be urged in the case before us: for,—

1. The elect are never called "the world" in Scripture; but are distinguished from it. "I have chosen you out of the world; therefore the world hateth you."

2. The common division of mankind, in the New Testament, is only into two parts; the disciples of Christ, and "the world." "If ye were of the world, the world would love its own." "Ye are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." "We know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness."

3. When the redemption of Christ is spoken of, it often includes both those who had been chosen out of the world, and those who remained still of the world. "And *you* hath he reconciled," say the apostles to those that had already believed; and as to the rest, "God was in Christ, reconciling *the world* unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed to us the word of reconciliation," plainly that they might beseech this "world" to be reconciled to God: so that both believers and unbelievers were interested in the reconciling ministry, and the work of Christ. "And he is the propitiation for our

sins, and not for ours only; but also for the sins of *the whole world*:" words cannot make the case plainer than these, since this same writer, in the same epistle, makes it evident how he uses the term "world," when he affirms that "*the world* lieth in wickedness," in contradistinction to those who knew that they were "of GOD."

4. In the general commission before quoted, the expression "world" is connected with universal terms which carry it forth into its utmost latitude of meaning. "Go ye into ALL the world, and preach the Gospel (the good news) to *every creature*;" and this too in order to his believing it, that he may be saved; "he that believeth shall be saved; and he that believeth not (this good news preached to him that he might be saved) shall be damned."

5. All this is confirmed from the gross absurdity of this restricted interpretation when applied to several of the foregoing passages. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that *whosoever* believeth in him should not perish." Now, if the world here means the elect world, or the elect not yet called out of it, then it is affirmed, that "*whosoever*," of this elect body, believeth shall not perish; which plainly implies, that some of the elect might not believe, and therefore perish, contrary to their doctrine. This absurd consequence is still clearer from the verses which immediately follow. John iii, 17, 18, "For God sent not his Son into the world, to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned; but he that believeth not is condemned already." Now here we must take the term "world," either extensively for all mankind or limitedly for the elect. If the former, then all men "through him may be saved," but only through faith: he therefore, of this world that believeth may be saved; but he of this world that believeth not is condemned already." The sense is here plain and consistent; but if, on the other hand, we take "the world" to mean the elect only, then he of this elect world that believeth may be saved, and he of the elect world that "believeth not is condemned;" so that the restricted interpretation necessarily supposes, that elect persons may remain in unbelief, and be lost. The same absurdity will follow from a like interpretation of the general commission. Either "all the world" and "every creature," mean every man, or the elect only. If the former, it follows, that he of this "world," any individual among those included in the phrase, "every creature," who believes, "shall be saved," or, not believing, "shall be damned:" if the latter, then he of the elect, any individual of the elect, who believes, "shall be saved," and any individual of the elect who believes not, "shall be damned." Similar absurdities might be brought out from other passages; but if these are candidly weighed, it will abundantly appear, that texts so plain and explicit cannot be turned into such consequences by any true method of interpretation, and that they must,

therefore, be taken in their obvious sense, which unequivocally expresses the universality of the atonement.

It has been urged, indeed, that our Lord himself says, John xvii, 9, "I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me." But will they here interpret "the world" to be the world of the elect? if so, they cut even them off from the prayers of Christ. But if by "the world" they would have us understand the world of the non-elect, then they will find that all the prayers which our Lord puts up for those whom "the Father hath given him," had the end, "that they" the non-elect "'world,' may believe that thou hast sent me," verse 21: let them choose either side of the alternative. The meaning of this passage is, however, made obvious by the context. Christ, in the former part of his intercession, as recorded in this chapter, prays exclusively, not for his Church in all ages, but for his disciples then present with him; as appears plain from verse 12, "While I was *with them in the world*, I kept them in thy name:" but he was only with his first disciples, and for them he exclusively prays in the first instance; then, in verse 20, he prays for all who, in future, should believe on him through their words; and he does this in order that "the world might believe." Thus "the world," in its largest sense, is not cut off, but expressly included in the benefits of this prayer.

John x, 15, "I lay down my life for the sheep," is also adduced, to prove that Christ died for none but his sheep. But the consequence will not hold; for there is no inconsistency between his having died for those that believe, and also for them that believe not. Christ is said to be "the Saviour of all men, and especially of them that believe;" two propositions which the apostle held to be perfectly consistent. The very context shows that Christ laid down his life for others beside those whom in that passage, he calls "the sheep." The sheep here intended, as the discourse will show, were those of the Jewish "fold;" for he immediately adds, "other sheep I have, which are not of this fold," clearly meaning the Gentiles: "them must I bring." He, therefore, laid down his life for them also; for the sheep in the fold, who "knew his voice, and followed him," and for them out of the fold, who still needed "bringing in;" even for "*the lost*, whom he came to seek and save," which is the character of all mankind: "all we like sheep have gone astray;" and "the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."

A restrictive interpretation of the first two classes of texts we have quoted above, may then be affirmed directly and expressly to contradict the plainest declarations of God's own word. For, it is not true, upon this interpretation that God loved "the world," if the majority he loved not; nor is it true that Christ was not "sent to condemn the world," if he was sent even to enhance its condemnation; nor that the Gospel, as the Gospel, can be preached "to every creature," if to the majority it can-

st be preached as "good tidings of great joy to all people;" for it is sad nd doleful tidings, if the greater part of the human race are shut out om the mercies of their Creator. If, then, in this interpretation there is palpable a contradiction of the words of inspiration itself, the system hich is built upon it cannot be sustained.

As to the texts which we have urged, as necessarily implying the nrestricted extent of the death of Christ, the usual answers to those hich speak of Christ having died for them that perish, may be briefly xamined. "Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died," om. xiv, 15. Him, says Poole, (*Annotations*,) for whom, "in the dgment of charity," we are to presume Christ died. To say nothing f the danger of such unlicensed paraphrases, in the interpretation of cripture, it is obvious that this exposition entirely annuls the motive by hich the apostle enforces his exhortation. Why are we not to be an ccasion of sin to our brother? The answer is, lest we "destroy him;" nd, in the parallel place, 1 Cor. viii, 11, lest "he perish." But what the aggravation of the offence? Truly that "Christ died for him;" nd so we have no tenderness for a soul on whom Christ had so much mpassion as to die for his salvation. Let the text then be tried, as raphrased by Poole and other Calvinists: "Destroy not him, for hom, in the judgment of charity, it may be concluded, Christ died;" nd it turns the motive the other way. For if I admit that none can be estroyed for whom Christ died, then, in proportion to the charity of my dgment, that any individual is of this number, I may be the less cau- ous of ensnaring his conscience in indifferent matters, since at least, is is certain, that he cannot perish, and I cannot be guilty of the ggravated offence of destroying him who was an object of the compas- on of Christ. Who can suppose that the apostle would thus counter- t his own design? or that he should seriously admonish his readers t to do that which was impossible, if, in fact, he taught them that hrist died only for the elect; and that they for whom he died, could ever perish? Another commentator, of the same school, explains this a caution against doing that which had a "*tendency* to the ruin of e for whom Christ died; not that it implies, that the weak brother ould actually perish." (*Rev. T. Scott's Notes.*) But in this case, also, it is assumed, that it was a doctrine taught by St. Paul, and received the Churches to whom he wrote, that the elect could not perish, the otive is taken away upon which the admonition is grounded. For if e persons to whom the apostle wrote, knew that the weak brother, for hom Christ died, could not perish, then nothing which they could do nd any "*tendency*" to destroy him. It might injure him, disturb his ind, lead him into sin, destroy his comforts; all, or any of which, ould have been appropriate motives on which to have urged the cau- on: but nothing can have even a tendency to *destroy* him whose sal-

vation is fixed by an unalterable decree. Mr. Scott is, however, evidently not satisfied with his own interpretation; and gives a painful example of the influence of a preconceived system in commenting upon Scripture, by charging the apostle himself with careless writing. "We may, however, observe, that the apostles did not write in that exact, systematical style which some affect, otherwise they would *scrupulously have avoided such expressions.*" This is rather in the manner of Priestley and Belsham, than that of an orthodox commentator; but it does homage to the force of truth by turning away from it, and by tacitly acknowledging that the Scriptures cannot be Calvinistically interpreted. The same commentators, following, as they do, in the train of the Calvinistic divines in general, may furnish, also, the answer to the argument, from 2 Peter ii, 1, "Denying the Lord that bought them, and bringing upon themselves swift destruction." Paulus gives us three interpretations: the first is, "the Lord that bought Israel out of Egypt;" as though St. Peter could be speaking of the Mosaic, and not of the Christian redemption; and as though the Judaizing teachers, supposing the apostle to speak of them, denied the God of the Jews, when it was their object to set up his religion against that of Christ. The second is, that "they were bought," or redeemed, by Christ, from temporal death, their lives having been spared: but we have no such doctrine in Scripture, as that the long suffering of wicked men, procured by Christ's redemption, is unconnected in its intent with their eternal salvation. The barren fig tree was spared at the intercession of Christ, that means might be taken with it, to make it fruitful; and in this same Epistle of St. Peter, he teaches us to "account the long suffering of the Lord *salvation;*" meaning, doubtless, in its tendency and intention. To this we may add, that there is nothing in the context to warrant this notion of mere temporal redemption. The third interpretation is, "that they denied the Lord, whom *they professed* to have bought them." This also is gratuitous, and gives a very different sense from that which the words of the apostle convey. But it is argued, that the offence would be the same in denying Christ, whether he really died for them, or that they had professed to believe he died for them. Certainly not. Their crime, as it is put by the apostle, is not the denying of their former profession, or denying Christ, whom they formerly professed to have bought them; but denying Christ, who had actually bought them, and whom, for that reason, they ought never to have denied, but confessed at the hazard of their lives. Farther, if they merely denied that which they formerly professed, namely that Christ had bought them, and, in point of fact, he never did buy them, they were in error when they professed to believe that he bought them, and spoke the truth only when they denied it; and if it be said, that they knew not but he had bought them, when they denied him, this

might be a reason for their not being rewarded for renouncing an error, as being done unwittingly; but can be no reason for their being punished, though unwittingly they went back to the truth of the case.—There can be no great guilt in our denying Christ, if Christ never died for us.

Mr. Scott partly adopts, and partly rejects Poole's solution of this Scriptural difficulty. But as he charged St. Paul with want of exactness in writing to the Romans, so also St. Peter, in the passage before us, comes in for his share of the same censure. "It was not the manner of the sacred writers, to express themselves with that systematic exactness, which many now affect." The question is not, however, one of systematic exactness; but of common intelligible writing. Mr. Scott's observation on this passage, is, "that Christ's ransom was of infinite sufficiency; and the proposal of it, in Scripture, general; so that men are addressed according to their profession: but that Christ only *intended* to redeem those, whom he foresaw would eventually be saved." (*Notes on* 2 *Peter*.) On this we may remark, 1. That the sufficiency of Christ's redemption is not in question; but the redemption itself of these deniers of Christ: he is called "the Lord *that bought* them." In that sufficiency, too, Mr. Scott affirms, in fact, that they had no interest; for Christ did not "intend to redeem them;" on this showing, therefore, the Lord did not "buy them," which contradicts the apostle. 2. That the "proposal of the benefits of Christ's redemption is general;" and that men are addressed, accordingly, as those who are interested in it, we grant, and feel how well this accords with the doctrine of general redemption; but the difficulty lies with those who hold the limitation of Christ's redemption to the elect only, to explain, not merely how it is that men are addressed generally; but how the sins of those who perish, can be aggravated by the circumstance of Christ's having bought them, if he did not buy them; and how they can be punished for rejecting him, if they could never receive him, so as to be saved by him. This aggravation of their offence, by the circumstance of Christ having bought them, is the doctrine of the text, of the force of which the above interpretations are manifest evasions.

We come now to the case of the apostates, mentioned in the Epistle to the Hebrews, vi, 4–8, and x, 26–31. With respect to these passages, it is agreed that they speak of the ultimate and eternal condemnation and rejection of the persons mentioned in them. The question then is, whether Christ died for them, as he died for such as persevere? which is to be determined by another question, whether they were ever true believers, and had received saving grace? If this be allowed, the proposition is established, that Christ died for them that perish; but in order to arrest this conclusion, all Calvinistic divines agree in denying that the persons referred to by the apostle, and against whom his terrible

denunciations are directed, were ever true believers, or capable of becoming such; and here again we have another pregnant instance of the violence done to the obvious meaning of the word of God, through the influence of a preconceived system. For,

1. It will not be denied that the Hebrews, to whom the epistle was addressed, were, in the main, at least, true believers; and that the passages in question were written to preserve them from apostasy; of which the rejection, and hopeless punishment, described by the apostle, is represented as the consequence. But if St. Paul had taught them, as he must have done, if Calvinism be the doctrine of the New Testament, that they never could so fall away, and so perish, this was no warning at all to them. To suppose he held out that as a terror, which he knew to be impossible, and had taught them also to be impossible, is the first absurdity which the Calvinistic interpretation involves.

2. It will not be denied, that he speaks of these wretched apostates, as deterring examples to the true believers among the Hebrews; but as such apostates never were believers, and were not even rendered capable, by the grace of God, of becoming such, they could not be admonitory examples. To assume that the apostle, for the sake of argument and admonition, supposes believers to be in the same circumstances and case as those who never were, and never could be believers, and when he had instructed them that their cases could never be similar, is the second absurdity.

3. The apostates in question are represented, by the apostle, "as falling away" from "repentance," and from Christ's "sacrifice for sins." The advocates of the system of partial redemption, affirm, that they fell away only from their profession of repentance and doctrinal belief of Christ's sacrifice for sins, in which they never had, and never could have, any interest. Yet the apostle places the hopelessness of their state on the impossibility of "renewing them *again* to repentance;" which proves that he considered their first repentance genuine and evangelical; because the absence of such a repentance as they had at first, is given as the reason of the hopelessness of their condition. He moreover heightens the case, by alleging, that there remained "no more sacrifice for sins;" which as plainly proves that, before their apostasy, there was a sacrifice for their sins, and that they had only cut themeslves off from its benefits by "wilfully" renouncing it; in other words, that Christ died for them, and that they had placed themselves out of the reach of the benefit of his death, by this one act of aggravated apostasy. The contrast lies between a hopeful and a hopeless case. Theirs was once a hopeful case, because they had "repented," and because there was then a "sacrifice for sins;" afterward it became hopeless, because it was "impossible to renew them *again* unto repentance," and the sacrifice for sin no more remained for them: they

had not only renounced their profession of it; but had renounced the sacrifice itself, by renouncing Christianity. Now, so to interpret the apostle, as to make him describe the awful condition of apostates, as a "falling away" into a state of hopelessness, when, if Calvinism be the doctrine of the New Testament, their case was never really hopeful, but was as hopeless, as to their eternal salvation, before as after their apostasy, is the third absurdity.

4. But it is plain that theirs had been a state of actual salvation which could only result from their having had an interest in the death of Christ. The proof of this lies in what the apostle affirms of the previous state of those who had finally apostatized, or might so apostatize. They were "enlightened;" this, the whole train of Calvinistic commentators tell us, means a mere speculative reception of the doctrine of the Gospel; they had "tasted of the heavenly gift," and of "the good word of God;" that is, say Poole and others, "they tasted, not digested; they had superficial relishes of joy and peace," and are to be compared "to the stony-ground hearers, who received the word with joy." "And were made partakers of the Holy Ghost;" that is, say some commentators of this class, in his operations, "trying how far a natural man may be raised, and not have his nature changed:" (*Poole in loc.:*) others, "by the communication of miraculous powers." They had "tasted of the powers of the world to come;" that is, they had felt the powerful doctrines of the Gospel, but as all reprobates may feel them, sometimes powerfully convincing their judgment, at others troubling their consciences. "All these things," says Scott, (*Notes,*) "often take place in the hearts and consciences of men, who yet continue unregenerate." These interpretations are undoubtedly forced upon these authors by the system they have adopted; but it unfortunately happens for them, that the apostle uses no term less strong in describing the religious experience of these apostates than he does in speaking of that of true believers. They were "*enlightened,*" is said of these apostates, "the eyes of your understanding being *enlightened,*" is said of the Ephesians; and "being turned from darkness to light" is the characteristic of all believers. The apostates "tasted the heavenly *gift;*" this, too, is affirmed of true believers, "much more they which receive abundance of grace, and of the *gift* of righteousness, shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ," Rom. v, 17. To be made "partakers of the Holy Ghost," is also the common distinctive character of all true Christians. "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his;" "but ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you." "To *taste* the heavenly gift" and "the good word of God," is also made the mark of true Christianity: "if so be ye have *tasted* that the Lord is gracious." Finally, "the *powers* of the world to come;" that is, of the Gospel dispensation, or the power of the Gospel, stand in precisely the same case.

This Gospel is the "power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." Since, then, the apostle expresses the prior experience of these apostates, by the same terms and phrases as those by which he designates the work of God in the hearts of those whose Christianity is, by all, acknowledged to be genuine, where is the authority on which these commentators make him describe, not a saving work in the hearts of these apostates, during the time they hold fast their profession, but a simulated one? They have clearly no authority for this at all; and their comments arise not out of the argument of St. Paul, nor out of his terms or phrases, or the connection of these passages with the rest of the discourse; but out of their own theological system alone; in other words, out of a mere human opinion which supplies a meaning to the apostle, of which he gives not the most distant intimation. To make the apostle describe the falling away from a mere profession unaccompanied with a state of grace, by terms which he is constantly using to describe and characterise a state of grace, is the fourth absurdity.

We mark, also, two other absurdities. The interpretations above given are *below* the force of the terms employed; and they are *above* the character of reprobates.

They are *below* the force of the terms employed. To "taste the heavenly gift," is not a mere intellectual or sentimental approval of it; for this heavenly gift is distinguished both from the Holy Spirit, and from the word of God, mentioned afterward; which leaves us no choice but to interpret it of Christ: and then to taste of Christ, is to receive his grace and mercy; "if so be ye have tasted that the Lord is *gracious*." Thus the Greek fathers, and many later divines, understand it of the remission of sins; which interpretation is greatly confirmed by Rom. v, where "the *gift*," "the free *gift*," and "the *gift by grace*," are used both for the means of our justification, and for justification itself. To "taste the heavenly gift," then, is, in this sense, so to taste that the Lord is gracious as to receive the remission of sins. To be made "partakers of the Holy Ghost," follows this in the usual order of describing the work of God in the heart. It is the fruit of faith, the Spirit of adoption and sanctification—the Spirit in his comforting and renewing influences following our justification. To restrain this participation of the Holy Ghost to the endowment of miraculous powers, requires it to be previously established, either, 1. That *all* professing Christians, in that age, were thus endowed with miraculous powers, of which there is no proof; or, 2. That only those who were thus endowed with miraculous gifts were capable of this aggravated apostasy; and then the apostle's warning would not be a general one, even to the Christians of the apostolic age, nor even to all the believing Hebrews, which it manifestly is. On the other hand, since all true believers, in the sense of the apostle, received the Holy Ghost in his comforting and renovating influences, the

meaning of the phrase becomes obvious, and it lays down the proper ground for a general admonition. Again; "to taste the good word of God," is still an advance in the process of a genuine experience. It is tasting the *good* word, that is, the goodness of the word in a course of experience and practice; having personal proof of its goodness and adaptation to man's state in the world: for to argue from the term "taste," as though something superficial and transitory only were meant, is as absurd as to argue from the threat of Christ that those who refused the invitation of his servants should not "*taste*" of his supper, that he only excluded them from a superficial and transient gustation of his salvation here and hereafter; or that, when the psalmist calls upon us to "*taste* and see that the Lord is good," he excludes a full, and rich, and permanent experience of the Divine goodness. Finally, if by the "powers of the world to come," it could be proved that the apostle meant the miraculous evidences of the truth of the Gospel, it would not follow that he supposes the persons spoken of to be endowed with miraculous powers; but that to *taste* these powers, was rather to experience the abundant blessings of a religion thus confirmed and demonstrated by signs and wonders and divers miracles, according to what he urges in chap. ii, 4, of the same epistle. The phrase, however, is probably a still farther advance upon the former, and signifies a personal experience of the mighty energy and saving power of the Gospel. Thus the interpretation of the Calvinists has the absurdity of making the apostle speak little things in great words, and of using unmeaning tautologies. To "partake of the Holy Ghost" is, according to them, to have the gift of miracles, and to taste "the powers of the world to come" is to have the gift of miracles. To taste the "heavenly gift," is to have a superficial relish of Gospel doctrine, and "to taste the good word of God," is also to have a superficial relish of Gospel doctrine: but how, then, are we to take the term "taste," when the apostle speaks of *tasting* "the powers of the world to come?" According to these comments, this can only mean that they had a superficial *taste* of the power of working miracles!

But as these interpretations are *below* the force of the terms, so they are *above* the capacity of the reprobate. "They had, moreover," says Scott, "tasted of the good word of God, and their connections, impressions, and transient affections, made them sensible that it was a good word, and that it was for their good to attend to it; and their purposes of doing so had produced such hopes and joys as have been described in the case of the stony-ground hearers, Matt. xiii, 21, 22." That Mr. Scott had no right apprehension of the class of persons intended by those who received the good seed upon stony ground, might easily be proved; but this is beside our present purpose. We find in the words quoted above, (and we refer to Mr. Scott rather than to the older divines of the same school, because it is often said that Calvinism is now modified and

improved,) "convictions," "impressions of the goodness of the word," and purposes of attending to it, ascribed to the non-elect; persons to whose salvation this bar is placed, that, according to this commentator, and all others who adopt the same system, Christ never "intentionally" died for them. We ask, then, are these "convictions, impressions," and "purposes," from the grace of God working in man, or from the natural man wholly unassisted by the grace of God? If the latter, then what becomes of the doctrine of the entire corruption of human nature, which they profess to hold, and that so strenuously? "In me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing." By the flesh, the apostle means, doubtless, his natural and unassisted state. Yet how many "good things" are ascribed, by Mr. Scott, to the very reprobate? "Conviction of the truth of the Gospel" was doubtless "good," and showed, in that day especially, when the prejudices of education had not yet come into the aid of truth, an honest spirit of inquiry, and a docile mind. "Impressions" are still better, as they argue affection to truth which the natural man, as such, hates; and these are improved into an acknowledgment "of the goodness of the word," though it is a reproving word, and a doctrine of holiness, and consequently of restraint. To this the merely "carnal mind," which St. Paul declares to be "enmity against God," is here allowed not only to assent, but also to perceive with some taste and approving relish. "Purposes of attending to this good word," are also admitted, which is a still farther advance, and must by all be acknowledged to be "good," as they are the very basis of real religious attainment. Yet if all these, which, in the judgment of every spiritual man would be considered as placing such persons in a very hopeful state, and would give joy to angels, unless they were admitted to the secret of reprobation, are to be ascribed to nature; then the carnal mind is not absolutely and in all cases "enmity against God;" in our "flesh some good thing may dwell;" and we are not by nature "dead in trespasses and sins."

Let us then suppose, since this position cannot be maintained in defiance of the Scriptures, that these are the effects of the grace of God, and the influences of the Holy Spirit in man; to what end is that grace exerted? Is it that it may lead to salvation? This is denied, and consistently so; for can such convictions, and desires, and purposes, lead to true repentance, when Christ gives true repentance to none but to the elect? Nor can they lead to pardon, because Christ has not intentionally "died for the persons in question." Is the end, then, as Poole, or rather his continuator states it, that the Holy Spirit may "try how far a natural man may be raised" without ceasing to be so? If that is affirmed, for whose sake is the experiment tried? Not surely for the sake of the Holy Spirit, whose omniscience needs no instruction by experiment: not for ours; for this, instead of being edifying, only puzzles and con-

founds us, for who can tell how far this experiment may go, and how far it is making upon himself? This, too, is so very unworthy an aspersion upon the Holy Spirit, that it ought to make sober men very much suspect the system which requires it. Is it then, finally, as some have affirmed, to make the persons more guilty, and to heighten their condemnation? How few Calvinists, in the present day, are bold enough to affirm this, although the advocates of that system have formerly done it; and yet this is the only *practical* end which their system will allow to be assigned to such an act as that which, by a strange abuse of terms, is called the operation of "common *grace*" in the hearts of the reprobate. In no other practical end can it issue, but to aggravate their guilt and damnation, as the old divines of this school perceived and acknowledged. Either, then, their interpretation of these passages affirms a change in the principles and feelings of the persons spoken of by the apostle in this epistle, much above the capacity and power of reprobates, greatly as it falls below the real import of the terms used; or else those who advocate the doctrine of reprobation are bound to the revolting conclusion, that the Holy Spirit thus works in them only to promote and deepen their destruction.

To that class of texts, which make it the duty of men to believe the Gospel, and threaten them with punishment for not believing, and which we adduced to prove, by necessary implication, that Christ died for all men, it has been replied, that it is the duty of all men to believe the Gospel, whether they are interested in the death of Christ or not; and that they are guilty and deserving of punishment for not believing it. By this argument it is conceived, that all such passages are made consistent with the doctrine of the limited extent of the death of Christ.

On both sides, then, it is granted, that it is the bounden duty of all men who hear the Gospel to believe it, and that the violation of this duty induces condemnation; but if Christ died not for all such persons, we think it is plain, that it cannot be their duty to believe the Gospel; and if this can be established, then does the Scriptural principle of the obligation of all men to believe, which is acknowledged on both sides, refute all limitation of the extent of Christ's atonement.

To settle this point it is necessary to determine what is meant by believing the Gospel. Some writers in this controversy seem to take it only in the sense of giving credit to the Gospel as a Divine revelation; and not for accepting and trusting in it in order to salvation. But we have, in the New Testament, no such division of the obligation of believing into two distinct duties, one laid upon one class of persons, and the other upon another class. So far from this, the faith which the Gospel requires of *all*, is *trust* in the Gospel;—"repentance toward God, and faith (trust) in our Lord Jesus Christ." Will any say, that when all men are commanded "every where to repent," two kinds of

repentance are intended, one ineffectual, the other effectual; one to death, the other to life? And if not, will he contend that God commands one kind of faith to some, a faith which cannot lead to salvation, another kind of faith, which does lead to salvation to others? that he commands a dead faith to the reprobate, a living faith to the elect? For according to the intention of the command, such must be the duty; and if it is the duty of the reprobate to believe with the mere faith of assent, which, as to them, is dead, then no more was ever required of them, in the intention of God, than this dead faith. But if men will affirm this, they must show us such a restricted and modified command from God; and they must point out, in the commands which we have to believe in Christ, such a distinction of the obligation of believing into a higher and lower duty. There is no such modified command, and there is no such distinction; but, on the contrary, the faith which is required of all is that, and not less than that, whereof cometh salvation; for with remission of sins and salvation it is constantly connected. "He that believeth shall be saved." "Whosoever believeth on him shall not perish." "That believing ye might have life through his name." "To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins." The faith, then, required of all is true faith; true faith following true repentance, the trust of a true penitent in the sacrifice of Christ as offered for his sins, that he may be forgiven, and received into the family of God.

If this, then, be the faith which is required of all who hear the Gospel, it is not, and cannot be the duty, of those to believe the Gospel in the Scriptural sense of believing, for whom Christ died not. 1. Because it is impossible, and God cannot command a thing impossible, and then punish men for not doing it; for this contradicts all notions of justice and benevolence. Nor does it alter the case whether the impossibility arises from a positive necessitating decree, or from withholding the aid necessary to enable them to comply with the command; such persons as those for whom Christ died not, never had, and never can have, the power to exercise the saving faith which is enjoined upon them; and being impossible to them, it never could be the subject of express command and obligation as to them; which nevertheless it is. 2. Because, according to the Calvinistic opinion, it is not in the intention of God that they should believe and be saved: what, therefore, he never intended, he could not command; and yet he has plainly commanded it. 3. Because what all are bound to believe or trust in, is true: but it is false, according to this system, that Christ died for the reprobate, and therefore they are not bound to believe or trust in him, though they are both commanded to believe, and threatened with condemnation if they believe not.

Here, then, is the dilemma into which all must fall, who deny that the necessary inference from the universal obligation to believe in Christ, is,

as we have stated it, that he died for all. If they deny the universality of the obligation to believe, they deny plain and express Scripture, which commands all men to believe; if they affirm the obligation to believe to be universal, they hold that men are bound to do that which is impossible; that the Lawgiver commands them to do what he never intended they should do; and that they are bound to believe and trust in what is not true, namely, that Christ died for them, and thus to lean upon a broken reed, and to trust their salvation to a delusion.

This is a difficulty which the theologians of this school have felt. The synod of Dort says, (*Act. Syn. Dord*, part 1, cap. 2, art. 5,) "It is the promise of the Gospel, that whosoever believes in Christ crucified should not perish, but have everlasting life; which promise, together with the *injunction* of repentance and faith, ought promiscuously and without distinction, to be declared and published to all men and people to whom God in his good pleasure sends the Gospel." But as some of the later Calvinists found themselves perplexed with this statement, they began to differ from the synod; and, allowing that Christ died for all whom he commands to believe in him, denied that God had commanded all men so to believe. (*Vide Womack's Arcana Dogmatum*, page 67.) These divines chose to fall on the opposite horn of the dilemma, and thus expressly to deny the word of God. Others have endeavoured to escape the difficulty by making faith in Christ a command of the moral law, under which even reprobates, as they take it, unquestionably are, and argue, that as by the principle of moral law, all are bound to believe every thing which God hath revealed, so by that law all are bound to believe in Christ, and, failing of that, are by the moral law justly condemned. It were easy, in answer to this, to show, that no man in the state of a reprobate, as they represent it, is under law of any kind, except a law of necessity to do evil; but waiving this, it were as easy to prove, that, because the moral law obliges us, "*in principle*," to do all which God commands, the command to the Jews to circumcise their children was a command of the moral law, as that to believe in Christ is a command of the moral law, because, in principle, it obliges us to believe what God has revealed. But should it be admitted that all are bound, by the moral law, to believe all that God reveals, yet, according to them, it is not revealed that Christ died for all; this we contend for, but they contend against: all are not, upon that very principle, therefore, bound to believe that Christ died for them. Farther, those who hold this notion, contend that the moral law commands us to do a thing impossible, and contrary to truth; and thus they fall upon the other horn of the dilemma.

The last class of texts we have adduced in favour of general redemption consists of those which impute the blame and fault of their non-salvation to men themselves. If Christ died for all men, so as to make their salvation practicable, then the fault, according to the doctrine of

Scripture, lies in themselves; if he died not so for them that they may be saved, then the bar to their salvation lies out of themselves, and in the absence of any saving provision for them in the Gospel, which is contrary to the doctrine of Scripture.

We enter not now upon the questions of the invincibility of grace, and free and bound will. These will come under consideration in this place; and we now confine ourselves to the argument, as it is grounded upon texts of this class as given above. The common reply to our argument, grounded upon these texts, at least among the more moderate kind of Calvinists, is, that the fault is indeed in the will of man, and that if men willed to come to Christ, that they might have life, they would have life; and thus, they would have it understood, that the argument is answered. This, however, we deny: they have neither refuted it, nor escaped its force; and nothing which is thus apparently conceded weakens the force of the conclusion, that if the bar to men's salvation is wholly in themselves, it lies not in the want of a provision made for their salvation in the Gospel; and therefore they are so interested in the death of Christ, that they may be saved by it.

For let us put the case as to the non-elect, who are indeed the persons in question. Either it is possible for them to will to come to Christ, and to believe in him; or it is not. If the former, then they may come to Christ, and believe in him, without obtaining life and salvation; for he can dispense those blessings only to those for whom he purchased them, which, it is contended, he did for the elect only. If the latter, then the bar to their salvation is not in themselves; but is that which makes it impossible for them to will to come to Christ, and to believe in him. If it be said, that though this is impossible to them, yet that still the bar is in themselves, because it is in the obstinacy and perverseness of their own wills, we ask, whether the natural will of the elect is so much better than that of the reprobate, that by virtue of that better natural will, they come to Christ and believe in him? This they will deny, and ascribe their willing, and coming to Christ, and believing in him, to the influence only of Divine grace. It will follow then, from this, that the bar to this same kind of willing, and believing, on the part of the reprobate, lies not in themselves, where the Scriptures constantly place it, and so charge it upon men as their *fault*, and the *reason of their condemnation*; but in something without them, even in the determination and decree of God not to bestow upon them that influence of his grace, by which this good will, and this power to believe in Christ, are wrought in the elect: which is precisely what the synod of Dort has affirmed. "This was the most free counsel, gracious will, and intention of God the Father; that the lively and saving efficacy of the most precious death of his Son should manifest itself in all the elect, for the bestowing upon them ONLY justifying faith; and bringing THEM in-

fallibly by it unto eternal life." (Cap. 2, art. 8.) This doctrine cannot, therefore, be true; for the Scriptures plainly place the bar to the salvation of them that are lost, in themselves, and charge the fault only on the wilful disobedience and unbelief of men; while this opinion places it in the refusal, on the part of God, to bestow that grace upon the non-elect, by which alone the evil of their natural will can be removed.

Nor is this in the least remedied by arguing, that as Christ is rejected freely and voluntarily by the natural will of man, the guilt is still chargeable upon himself. For, not here to anticipate what may be said on the freedom of the will, it is confessed by Calvinists that the will of the reprobate is not free to choose to come to Christ, and believe in him, since without grace, not even the elect can do this. But if it were free to choose Christ, and believe in him, the not doing it would not be chargeable upon them as a fault. For they do not reject Christ as a Saviour, since he is not offered to *them* as such; and they sin not, by not believing, that is, by not trusting in Christ for salvation. For as it is not the will of God that they should so believe, they violate no command given to *them* to believe, unless it be held that God commands them to do that which he wills they should not do; which is only absurdly to say that he wills, and he does not will the same thing. And seeing that his commands are the declarations of his will, if the command reaches to them, it is a declaration that he wills that concerning them, which, on this system, he does not will; and this contradiction all are bound to maintain, who charge the want of faith, as a fault upon those to whom the power of believing is not imparted.

But the argument from this class of texts is not exhausted. They not only place that bar and fault which prevents the salvation of men in themselves; but they as expressly exclude God from all participation in it, contrary to the doctrine before us. "He willeth all men to be saved;" he has "no pleasure in the death of him that dieth." "He sent his Son not to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved;" and he invites all, beseeches all, obtests all, and makes even his threatenings merciful, since he interposes them to prevent men from going on still in their trespasses, and involving themselves in final ruin.

Perhaps not many Calvinists in the present day are disposed to resort to the ancient subterfuge, of a secret and a revealed will of God; (2) and yet it is difficult to conceive how they can avoid admitting this notion, without totally denying that which is so clearly written, that God "willeth all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth;' and that he commands, by his apostle, that prayers should be made "for all men." The universality of such declarations has already been established; and no way is left for escaping the difficulty in this direction.

(2) The scholastic terms are *voluntas signi*, and *voluntas bene placiti*, a signified or revealed will, and a will of pleasure or purpose.

The incompatibility of such declarations, with the limited extent of Christ's death, is therefore obvious, unless the term "*will*" can be modified. But if God declares his will in absolute terms, while he has yet secret reserves of a contrary kind, (to say nothing of the injury done by such a notion, to the character of the God of truth, whose words are without dross of falsehood, "as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times;") this is to will that all men may be saved in word, and yet not to will it in *fact*, which is in truth not to will it at all. No subtlety of distinction can reconcile this. Nor, according to this scheme of doctrine, can God in any way, will the salvation of the non-elect. He will only under one condition, that he wills the salvation of any man: namely, through the death of Christ. His justice required this atonement for sin; and he could not will man to be saved to the dishonour of his justice. If then that atonement does not extend to all men, he cannot will the salvation of all men; for such of them as are not interested in that atonement, could not be saved consistently with his righteous administration, and he could not, therefore, will it. If, then, he wills the salvation of the elect to be saved, *in any sense*, he must will this independently of Christ's sacrifice for sins; and if he cannot will this for the reason just given, he cannot "will all men to be saved," which is contrary to the text quoted: he cannot, therefore, invite all to be saved; he cannot beseech all by his ministers to be reconciled to him; for these acts could not proceed from his willing them to be saved: and for the same reason "all men" ought not to be prayed for by those who hold this doctrine, since they assume, that it is not the will of God that all men should be saved. Thus they repeal the apostle's precept, as well as the principle upon which it is built, by mere human authority; or else they so interpret the principle, as to impeach the truth of God, and so practise the precept, as to indulge reserves in their own mind, similar to those they feign to be in the mind of God. While, therefore, it remains on record that "God willeth *all men* to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth;" and that he "willeth not that *any* should perish, but that *all* should come to repentance," it must be concluded, that Christ died for all; and that the reason of the destruction of any part of our race lies not in the want of a provision for their salvation; not in any limitation of the purchase of Christ, and the administration of his grace, but in their obstinate rejection of both.

CHAPTER XXVI.

The Same Subject Continued.

So far, then, we have advanced in this discussion as to show, that while no passage of Scripture can be adduced, or is even pretended to

ment, which declares that Christ did not die equally for all men, there are numerous passages which explicitly, and in terms which cannot, by any fair interpretation, be wrested from that meaning, declare the contrary; and that there are others, as numerous, which contain the doctrine by necessary implication and inference. To implication and inference the Calvinist divines also resort, and the more so, as they have not a direct text in favour of their scheme. It is necessary, therefore, in order to obtain a comprehensive view of this controversy, compressed into as narrow limits as possible, to examine those parts of Scripture which, according to their inferential interpretations, limit not merely the actual, but the intentional efficacy of the death of Christ to the elect only.

The first are those passages which treat of persons, said to be elected, foreknown, and predestinated to the spiritual and celestial blessings of the new dispensation; and the argument from the texts in which these distinctions occur, is, that the persons so called, elected, foreknown, and predestinated, are, by that very distinction, marked out as the only persons to whom the death of Christ intentionally extends.

We reserve it to another place to state the *systematic* views which the followers of Calvin, in their different shades of opinion, take of the doctrines of election, &c, lest our more simple inquiry into the sense of Scripture should be disturbed by extraneous topics; and we are now, therefore, merely called to consider, how far this argument, which is professedly drawn from Scripture and not from metaphysical principles, is supported or refuted, by an examination of those portions of Holy Writ on which it is usually built: and it will not prove a difficult task to show, that, when fairly interpreted, they contain nothing which obliges us to narrow our interpretation of those passages which extend the benefit of the death of Christ to all mankind; and that, in some views, they strongly corroborate their most extended meaning. Of a Divine election, or choosing and separation from others, we have three kinds mentioned in the Scriptures.

The FIRST is the election of individuals to perform some particular and special service. Cyrus was "elected" to rebuild the temple; the twelve apostles were "chosen," elected, to their office by Christ; St. Paul was a "chosen," or elected, "vessel," to be the apostle of the Gentiles. This kind of election to special office and service has, however, manifestly no relation to the limitation of eternal salvation, either in respect of the persons themselves so chosen, or of others. With respect to themselves, it did not confer upon them an absolute security. One of the twelve *elected* apostles was Judas, who fell and was lost; and St. Paul confesses his own personal liability to become "a castaway," after all his zeal and abundant labours. With respect to others, the twelve apostles, and St. Paul afterward, were "elected" to preach the Gospel in order to the salvation of all to whom they had access.

The SECOND kind of election which we find in Scripture, is the
tion of nations, or bodies of people, to eminent religious privileges,
in order to accomplish, by their superior illumination, the merciful
poses of God, in benefitting other nations or bodies of people. T
the descendants of Abraham, the Jews, were *chosen* to receive sp
revelations of truth; and to be "the people of God," to be his vi
Church, and publicly to observe and uphold his worship. "The L
thy God hath *chosen* thee to be a peculiar people unto himself, ab
all people that are upon the face of the earth." "The Lord had a
light in thy fathers to love them, and he *chose* their seed after th
even you, above all people." It was especially on account of the sp
cation of the terms ELECT, CHOSEN, and PECULIAR, to the Jewish peo
that they were so familiarly used by the apostles in their epistles
dressed to the believing Jews and Gentiles, then constituting the Ch
of Christ in various places. For Christians were the subjects, also
this second kind of election; the election of bodies of men to be
visible people and Church of God in the world, and to be endowed
peculiar privileges. Thus they became, though in a more special
exalted sense, the chosen people, the elect of GOD. We say in a m
special sense, because as the entrance into the Jewish Church was
natural birth, and the entrance into the Christian Church, properly
called, is by faith and a spiritual birth, these terms, although many
came Christians by mere profession, and enjoyed various privileg
consequence of their people or nation being chosen to receive the G
pel, have generally respect, in the New Testament, to bodies of
believers, or to the whole body of true believers as such. They are
therefore, to be interpreted, according to the scheme of Dr. Taylor
Norwich, by the constitution of the Jewish, but by the constitution
the Christian Church.

To understand the nature of this "election," as applied sometime
particular bodies of Christians, as when St. Peter says, "the Ch
which is at Babylon, *elected together* with you," and sometimes to
whole body of believers every where; and also the reason of the
quent use of the term election, and of the occurrence of allusions to
fact, it is to be remembered, that a great religious revolution, as
speak, had occurred in the age of the apostles; with the full impor
which we cannot, without calling in the aid of a little reflection
adequately impressed. This was no other than the abrogation of
CHURCH STATE of the Jews, which had continued for so many a
They had been the only visible acknowledged people of God in all
nations of the earth; for whatever pious people might have existe
other nations, they were not, in the sight of men, and collectively,
knowledged as "the people of Jehovah." They had no written rev
tions, no appointed ministry, no forms of authorized initiation into

h and covenant, no appointed holy days, no sanctioned ritual. All were peculiar to the Jews, who were, therefore, an elected and r people. This distinguished honour they were about to lose. might have retained it, had they, by believing the Gospel, admitted ieving Gentiles of all nations to share it with them; but the great of their peculiarity and election, *as a nation*, was terminated by ning of the Messiah, who was to be "a light to lighten the Gen- as well as "the glory of his people Israel." Their pride and ent unbelief resented this, which will explain their enmity to the g part of the Gentiles, who, when that which St. Paul calls "the hip of the mystery" was fully explained, chiefly by the glorious y of that apostle himself, were called into this Church relation ge of visible acknowledgment as the people of God, which the el formerly enjoyed, and that with even a higher degree of glory, ertion to the superior spirituality of the new dispensation. It was etrine which excited that strong irritation in the minds of the un- g Jews, and in some partially Christianized ones, to which so eferences are made in the New Testament. They were "pro- " were made "jealous;" and were often roused to the madness ecuting opposition by it. There was then a NEW ELECTION of a EOPLE of God, to be composed of Jews, not by virtue of their AL DESCENT, but of their faith in Christ, and of Gentiles of all , also believing, and put, as believers, on equal ground with the g Jews; and there was also a REJECTION, a reprobation, if the lease any one better; but not an absolute one: for THE ELEC- as offered to the Jews first, in every place, by offering them the . Some embraced it, and submitted to be the elect people of n the new ground of faith, instead of the old one of natural de- and therefore the apostle, Rom. xi, 7, calls the believing part of rs, "the election," in opposition to those who opposed this "elec- grace," and still clung to their former and now repealed election s and the descendants of Abraham;—"but *the election* hath ob- it, and the rest were blinded." The offer had been made to the ation; all might have joined the one body of believing Jews and g Gentiles; but the major part of them refused: they would not in to the supper;" they made "light of it;" light of an election l on faith, and which placed the relation of "the people of God" piritual attainments, and offered to them only spiritual blessings. ere, therefore, deprived of election and Church relationship of ind:—their temple was burned; their political state abolished; enealogies confounded; their worship annihilated; and all visi- nowledgment of them by God as a Church withdrawn, and trans- o a Church henceforward to be composed chiefly of Gentiles: s, says St. Paul, Rom. x, 19, "were fulfilled the words of Moses,

I will provoke you to jealousy by them that are *no people*, and by a foolish (ignorant and idolatrous) people I will anger you."

It is easy now to see what is the import of the "calling" and "election" of the Christian Church, as spoken of in the New Testament. It was not the calling and the electing of one nation in particular to succeed the Jews; but it was the calling and the electing of believers in all nations, wherever the Gospel should be preached, to be in reality what the Jews had been but typically, and, therefore, in an inferior degree, the visible Church of God, "his people," under Christ "the Head;" with an authenticated revelation; with an appointed ministry, never to be lost; with authorized worship; with holy days and festivals; with instituted forms of initiation; and with special protection and favour.

This second kind of election being thus explained, we may inquire, whether any thing arises out of it, either as it respects the Jewish Church, or the Christian Church, which obliges us in any degree to limit the explicit declarations of Scripture, as to the universal extent of the intentional benefit of the atonement of Christ.

With respect to the ancient election of the Jews to be the peculiar people and visible Church of God, we may observe,

1. That it did not argue such a limitation of the saving mercy of God to them, as that their election secured the salvation of every Jew individually. This will be acknowledged by all; for, as the foundation of their Church state was their natural relation to Abraham, and our Lord, with allusion to this, says to Nicodemus, "that which is born of the flesh is flesh," none of them could be saved by virtue of being "Jews outwardly."

2. That it did not argue, that *sufficient*, though not equal means of salvation, were not left to the non-elected Gentile nations. These were still a "law unto themselves;" and "in every nation," says St. Peter, "he that feareth God, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him."

3. That, so far from the election of the Jewish nation arguing that the mercy of God was restrained from the Gentile nations, it is manifest that, great reason as the Almighty had to be provoked by their idolatries the election of the Jews was intended for their benefit also; that it was not only designed to preserve truth, but to diffuse it, and to counteract the spread of superstition and idolatry. The miracles wrought from age to age among them, exalted "Jehovah" above the gods of the heathen; rays of light from their sacred books and institutions spread far beyond themselves; the temple of Solomon had its court of the Gentiles, and the "stranger" from "a far country" had access to it, and enjoyed his right of praying to the true God; their captivities and dispersions wondrously fulfilled the purposes of justice as to them, and of

mercy as to the nations into which they were carried; and their whole history bore an illustrious part in that series of the Divine dispensations by which the Gentile world was prepared for the coming of Christ, and the establishment of his religion. This subject has already been adverted to and illustrated in the first part of this work. Jerusalem was, in an inferior sense, literally "the joy of the whole earth;" and "in the seed of Abraham," all the nations of the earth have, in all ages, in some degree, been blessed.

With respect to the "election" of the Christian Church, we also observe,

1. That neither does its election suppose such a special grace of God, as secures infallibly the salvation of every one of its members; that is, in other words, of every elected person. For to pass over the case of those who are Christians but in name, even true Christians are exhorted to give diligence to make their "calling and election sure;" and are warned against "turning back to *perdition*." We have also seen, in the case of the apostates mentioned in the Epistle to the Hebrews, that, in point of fact, some of those who had thus been actually elected, and brought into a state of salvation, had fallen away into a condition of extreme hazard, or of utter hopelessness.

2. That the election of Christians, as members of the Church of Christ, concludes nothing against the saving mercy of God being still exercised as to those who are not of the Church. Even the Calvinists cannot deny this; for many who are not now of the body of the visible and true Church of Christ, may, according to their scheme, be yet called and chosen into that body, and thus partake of an election which, while they are notoriously wicked and alien from the Church of Christ, they do not actually partake of, whatever may be the secret purposes of God concerning them.

3. That Christians are thus elected, and made the Church of God, not in consequence of others being excluded from the compassions and redeeming mercy of Christ; but for their benefit and salvation, that they also may be called into the fellowship of the Gospel. "Ye are the light of the world;" "ye are the salt of the earth." But in what sense could the Church be "the light of the world," were there no capacity in the world to receive the same light with which it is itself enlightened? or "the salt of the earth," if it did not exist for the purifying of the mass beyond itself, with the same purity? Yet if such a capacity exists in "the world," it is from the grace of God alone that it derives it, and not from nature; a grace which could be imparted to the world only in consequence of the death of Christ. Thus nothing is to be argued from the actual election of the Christian Church, as God's visible and acknowledged people on earth, in favour of the doctrine that election limits the benefits of our Lord's atonement; but, on the contrary, this election of

the Church has, for one of its final causes, the illumination of the world. But as Calvinistic commentators have so generally confounded this *collective* election with *personal* election, (a doctrine to which, in its proper place, we shall presently advert,) and have, in consequence, misunderstood and misinterpreted the argument of St. Paul, in the ninth, tenth, and eleventh chapters of his Epistle to the Romans; this celebrated discourse of the apostle requires to be briefly examined.

Let the reader, then, take the epistle in his hand, and follow the argument in these chapters, with reference to the determining of the two main questions at issue, namely, whether personal or collective election be the subject of the apostle's discourse; and whether the election, of which he speaks, of whatever kind it may be, is, in the sense of the Calvinists, unconditional.

Let us examine the discourse, first, with reference to the question of personal or collective election.

It is acknowledged by all, that, whatever other subjects the apostle may or may not connect with it, he treats of the casting off of the Jews, as the visible Church of God, and the calling of the Gentiles into that relation. For the case of the Jews he expresses great "sorrow of heart;" not indeed because God had now determined to compose his visible Church upon a new principle, that of faith, and to constitute it no longer upon that of natural descent from Abraham; for to announce this doctrine St. Paul was chosen to be an apostle, and to call, by earnest and extensive labours, not only the Gentiles, but the Jews thankfully to submit to it, by receiving the Gospel: but he had great "sorrow of heart," both on account of their having rejected this gracious offer, and of the calamities which the approaching destruction of their nation would bring upon them, verses 1, 2. The enumeration which he makes in verses 4 and 5, of the religious honours and privileges of the Jewish nation, while it remained a Church accomplishing the purposes of God, shows that he did not intend, by proclaiming the new foundation on which God would now construct his Church, and elect to himself a people out of all nations, to detract at all from the Divinity or glory of the Mosaic dispensation.

The objection made, in the minds of the Jews, to this doctrine of the abolition of the Jewish visible Church as founded upon descent from Abraham, in the line of Isaac, was, as we may collect from, verse 6, that it was contrary to the word and promise of God made to Abraham. This objection St. Paul first refutes:—"Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect," literally "has fallen," or "fallen to the ground," that is, has not been accomplished; or as though this election of a new Church, composed only of believing Jews and Gentiles, was contrary to the promises made to Abraham, Gen. xvii, 7, 8, "I will establish my covenant between me and thee, for an everlasting covenant, to be a

God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee." This he proves, from several events, which the Jews could not deny, as being in the records of their own history. By these facts he shows, that the exclusion of a part of the seed of Abraham, at various times, from being the visible Church of God, was not, as the Jews themselves must allow, any violation of the covenant with Abraham. He first instances the case of the descendants of Jacob himself, although he was the son of Isaac. "All are not Israel, (God's visible Church and acknowledged people,) who are of Israel," or Jacob; for a great part of the ten tribes who had been carried into captivity before the Babylonian invasion of Judah, had never returned, had never been again collected into a people, and had, for ages, been cast out of their ancient Church state and relation, though, by natural descent, they were "of Israel," that is, descendants of Jacob.

From Jacob he ascends to Abraham, verse 7: "Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children," that is Abraham's "seed" in the sense of the promise; "but in Isaac" not in Ishmael, "shall thy SEED be called;" "that is, they which are the children of the flesh," Ishmael by Hagar, and his descendants, "these are not the children of God. But the children of the promise," Isaac, born of Sarah, and his descendants "are counted for the seed," meaning, obviously, for that seed to whom the promise refers. He gives a third instance of this election and exclusion taken from the children of Isaac, ver. 10–13, "And not only this; but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac; (for the children being not yet born, neither having done good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election," the election of one in preference to the other, "might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;) it was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." On this last passage, so often perverted to serve the system of Calvinian election and reprobation, a few remarks more at large may be allowed.

1. The argument of the apostle, of which this instance is in continuance requires us to understand that he is still speaking of "the seed" intended in the promise, which did not comprise all the descendants either of Abraham, or Isaac, or Jacob, for he brings instances of exclusion from each; but such as God elected to be his visible Church: he is not therefore speaking of the personal election or rejection of Isaac, or Ishmael, or Jacob, or Esau; but of their descendants in certain lines, as elected to be the acknowledged Church of GOD.

2. This is proved, also, from those passages in the history of Moses, which furnish the facts on which the apostle reasons, and which he quotes briefly as being well known to the Jews. "As it is written, The elder shall serve the younger." Now this is written, Gen. xxv, 23, "TWO NATIONS are in thy womb, and two manner of PEOPLE shall be

separated from thy bowels; and the one PEOPLE shall be stronger than the other PEOPLE; and the elder," the descendants of the elder, "shall serve the younger." So far, indeed, was this prophecy from being intended of Esau personally, that he himself did never serve his brother Jacob, although he wantonly surrendered to him his birthright. Another passage is found in the Prophet Malachi i, 2, 3, and expresses God's dealings, not with the individuals Jacob and Esau; but with their descendants, who, according to frequent usage in Scripture, are called by the names of their first ancestors. "Was not Esau Jacob's brother? yet I loved Jacob, and I hated Esau, and laid his mountains and his heritage waste for the dragons of the wilderness!" judgments which fell not upon Esau personally, but upon the Edomites his descendants.

3. If the apostle, in this instance of Jacob and Esau, speaks of the rejection or reprobation of *individuals*, he says nothing at all to his purpose, because he is discoursing of the rejection of the Jews, as A NATION, from being any longer the visible and acknowledged Church of God in the world; so that instances of individual reprobation would have been impertinent to his purpose. But to proceed with the apostle's discourse.

Having shown, by these instances, that God had limited the covenant to a part of the descendants of Abraham, at different periods, he puts [illegible] the objecting Jews to say, whether, on that account, there was a [illegible] of his covenant with Abraham; "What shall we say then, Is there [illegible] righteousness with God? God forbid." The word unrighteousness is usually taken in the sense of injustice, but is sometimes used in the sense of falsehood and unfaithfulness, by the writers of the New Testament, as well as by the LXX; and in this sense it well agrees with the apostle's reasoning; "Is there then unfaithfulness with God," because he has so frequently limited the promise made to the seed of Abraham, to particular branches of that seed? The apostle denies that in this there was any *unfaithfulness*, or, in the sense of injustice, which perhaps is to be preferred, any "*unrighteousness* in God;" and the Jews themselves are bound to agree with him, since, as the apostle adds, it was a general principle laid down in their own law, by the Lawgiver himself when speaking to Moses, and by which, therefore, all such promises of special favour must be interpreted,—"I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion." The connection of these words as they stand in Exodus xxxiii, 19, shows that the *mercy* and *grace* here spoken of, refer not, as Beza would have it, to that mercy exercised to individuals which supposes *misery*, and consists in the exercise of pardon; but to the granting of special favours and privileges. For the words are spoken to Moses, in answer to his prayer, "I beseech thee, show me thy glory." To him God had before said, verse 17, "Thou hast found grace in my sight, and I know thee by thy name."

He was not, therefore, in the case of a guilty, miserable man. Nor do the words refer to the forgiveness of the people at his intercession. This had been done; the transaction, as to them, had been finished, as the history shows; and then Moses, encouraged by the success of his intercessions for them, makes a bold but wholly personal request for himself. "And he said, I beseech thee, show me thy glory. And he said, I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before thee; and will be gracious," in showing these great condescensions, "to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy." God has a right to select whom he pleases to enjoy special privileges; in this there is no "unrighteousness," and, therefore, in limiting those favours to such branches of Abraham's seed, as he chose to elect, neither his justice nor his truth was impeached. This is obvious, when the words are interpreted of the election of collective bodies of men, and of the individuals which compose them, to peculiar favours and religious privileges; while yet all others have still the means of salvation. The onus lies only upon them who interpret this part of Scripture of personal, unconditional election and reprobation, to show how it can be a "*righteous*" proceeding to punish men for not availing themselves of means of salvation which are never afforded them. This is manifestly "unrighteous;" but in the election and rejection spoken of by the apostle, he expressly denies that there is "unrighteousness with GOD;" he does this in a solemn manner, "God forbid:" and, therefore, the kind of election and rejection of which he speaks is not the unconditional election and reprobation of individuals to or from eternal salvation.

The conclusion of the apostle's answer to the objection of the Jews, that the casting off a part of the Jewish nation, even all who did not believe in Christ, was contrary to the promises made to Abraham, is, "So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy." He grants special favours, as the term "showing mercy," in the preceding verse, has been already proved to mean; and in granting these special favours he often acts contrary to the designs and efforts of men, and frustrates both. The allusion contained in these words, to the case of Isaac and Esau, is, therefore, highly beautiful and appropriate,—"it is not of him that *willeth*, nor of him that *runneth*." Isaac *willed* that Esau, the first born, should have the blessing; and Esau *ran* for the venison as the means of obtaining it; but still Jacob obtained it. The blessing was not, however, a personal one, but referred to the *people* of whom Jacob was to be the progenitor, as the history given by Moses will show. Thus this case also affords no example of personal election.

The apostle having proved that there was neither unfaithfulness nor unrighteousness in God, in selecting from his own good pleasure, from

his *sovereignty* if the term please better, the persons to be endowed with special religious honours and privileges, proceeds to show, with reference, not only to the exclusion of the Jews, as a nation, from the visible Church, but also to the terrible judgments which our Lord himself had predicted, and which were about to come upon them, that he exercises also the prerogative of making some notorious sinners, and especially when they set themselves to oppose his purposes, the eminent and unequivocal objects of his displeasure. Here again he uses for illustration an example taken from the Jewish Scriptures. But let the example be marked. Had it been his intention to show, that the personal election of Isaac and Jacob necessarily implied the personal reprobation of Ishmael and Esau; and that their not receiving special privileges necessarily cut them off from salvation, so that being left to themselves they became objects of wrath, then would he have selected them as his illustrative examples, for this would have been required by his argument. But he selects Pharaoh, not a descendant of Abraham; a person not involved in the cases of non-election which had taken place in Abraham's family; but a notoriously wicked prince, and one who resolved to oppose himself to the designs of God in the deliverance of Israel from bondage. His doctrine, then, manifestly is, that when these two characters meet in individuals, or in nations, notorious vice and flagrant opposition to God's plans and purposes, he often makes them the objects of his special displeasure; giving them up to the hardness of their hearts, and postponing their destruction to make it more impressively manifest to the world. In every respect Pharaoh was a most appropriate example to illustrate the case of the body of the unbelieving Jews, who, when the apostle wrote, were under the sentence of a terrible excision. Pharaoh had several times hardened his own heart; now God hardens it, that is, in Scripture language, withdraws his all-gracious interposition, and gives him up. So the Jews had hardened their hearts against repeated calls of Christ and his apostles; now God was about to give them up, as a nation, to destruction. Pharaoh was not suddenly cut off, but was spared; "for this same purpose have I raised thee up" from the effect of so many plagues; that is, I have not destroyed thee outright. The LXX translate, "thou hast been preserved;" for the Hebrew word rendered by us, "raised up," never signifies to bring a person or thing into being, but to preserve, support, establish, or make to stand. Thus, also, the Jews had not been instantly cut off; but had been "endured with much long suffering," to give them an opportunity of repentance, of which many availed themselves; and the remainder were still endured, though they were filling up the measure of their iniquities, and would, in the end, but by their own fault, display more eminently, the justice and severity of God. Pharaoh's crowning offence was his rebellious opposition to the designs of God in taking Israel

out of Egypt, and establishing them in Canaan as an independent nation, and as the Church of God; the Jews filled up the measure of their iniquities by endeavouring to withstand the purpose of God as to the Gentiles; his purpose to elect a Church, composed of both Jews and Gentiles, only on the ground of faith, and this made the cases parallel. Therefore, says the apostle, it follows from all these examples, that "he hath mercy on whom he will have mercy," gives special religious advantages to those whom he wills to elect for this purpose; "and whom he will," whom he chooses to select as examples from among notorious sinners who rebelliously oppose his designs, "he hardeneth," or gives up to a hardness which they themselves have cherished. In verse 19, the Jew is again introduced as an objector. "Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will?" and to this St. Paul answers, "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?" verse 20. The usual way in which the objection is explained, by non-Calvinistic commentators, is;—if the continuance of the Jews in a state of disobedience, was the consequence of the determination of God to leave them to themselves, why should God still find fault? If they had become obdurate by the judicial withholding of his grace, why should the Jews still be blamed, since his will had not been resisted, but accomplished? If this be the sense of the objection, then the import of the apostle's answer will be, that it is both perverse and wicked for a nation justly given up to obduracy, "to reply against God," or "debate" the case with him; and that it ought silently at least to submit to its penal dereliction, recollecting that God has an absolute power over nations, not only to raise them to peculiar honours and privileges, and to take them away, as "the potter has power over the clay to make one vessel to honour, and another to dishonour;" but to leave them to fill up the measure of their sins, that his judgments may be the more conspicuous. That this is a better and more consistent sense than that forced upon these words by Calvinistic commentators, may be freely admitted; but it is not wholly satisfactory.

For, 1. One sees not what can be expected from a people judicially given up, but a "replying against God;" or what end is to be answered by taking any pains to teach a people, in this hopeless case, not "to reply against God," but to suffer his judgments in silence.

2. As little discoverable, if this be the meaning, is the appropriateness of the apostle's allusion to the parable of the potter in Jeremiah, chap. xviii. There almighty God declares his absolute power over nations to give them what form and condition he pleases; but still under these rules, that he repents of the evil which he threatens against wicked nations, when they repent, and withdraws his blessings from

them when they are abused. But this illustration is surely not appropriate to the case of a nation given up to final obduracy, because the parable of the potter supposes the time of trial, as to such nations, not yet passed. "O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter, saith the Lord. Behold, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are ye in mine hand, O house of Israel. At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it; if that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them. And at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it; if it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good, wherewith I said I would benefit them." There is here no allusion to nations being kept in a state of judicial dereliction and obduracy, in order to make their punishment more conspicuous.

3. When the apostle speaks of the potter making of the "same lump, one vessel to honour and another to *dishonour*," the last text does not fully apply to the state of a people devoted to inevitable destruction. It is true, that in a following verse he speaks of "vessels of *wrath* fitted to destruction;" but that is in another view of the case of the Jews, as we shall immediately show; nor does he affirm that they were "fitted to destruction" by God. There he speaks of what they fit themselves for; or that fitness for the infliction of the Divine wrath upon them, which they themselves, by their perverseness, create. Here he speaks of an *act of God*, using the figure of a potter forming some vessels "to honour, others to dishonour." But dishonour is not destruction. No potter makes vessels to destroy them; and we may be certain, that when Jeremiah went down to the potter's house, to see him work the clay upon "the wheel," that the potter was not employed in forming vessels to destroy them. On the contrary, says the prophet, when the lump of clay was "marred in his hand;" so that not for want of skill in himself, but of proper quality in the clay, it took not the form he designed, of the same lump he made "another vessel, as it seemed good to the potter to make it;"—a meaner vessel, as the inferior quality or temper of the clay admitted, instead of that finer and more ornamental form which it would not take. The application of this was natural and easy to the house of Israel. It had become a lump of *marred clay* in the hands of the potter, which answered not to his design, and yielded not to his will. This illustrated the case of the Jews previous to the captivity of Babylon: they were marred in his hand, they were not answering the design for which he made them a people; but then the potter gave the stubborn clay another, though a baser form, and did not cast it away from him: he put the Jews into the condition of slaves and captives in a strange land, and reduced them from their

honourable rank among the nations. This might have been averted by their repentance; but when the clay became utterly "marred," it was turned into this inferior and less honourable form and state. But all this was not excision; not destruction. The proceeding was corrective, as well as punitive; it brought them to repentance in Babylon; and God "repented him of the evil." The potter took even that vessel which had been made unto dishonour for seventy years, and made of it again "a vessel unto honour," by restoring the polity and Church relation of the Jews.

4. The interpretation to which these objections are made, also supposes that the body of the Jewish nation had arrived at a state of derelictiion already. But this epistle was written several years before the destruction of Jerusalem; and although the threatening had gone forth, as to the derelicction and "hardening" of the perseveringly impenitent, it is plain, from the labours of the apostle himself to convert the Jews every where, and from his "*prayers*, that Israel might be saved," chap. x, 1; that he did not consider them, as yet at least, in this condition; though most of them, and especially those in Judea, were hastening to it.

Let us then take a view of this part of the apostle's discourse, in some respects different. The objecting Jew, upon the apostle having stated that God shows mercy, or special favour to whom he will, and selects out of the mass of sinners whom he pleases, for marked and eminent punishment, says, "Why doth he yet find fault?" "Why does he, by you, his messenger, allowing you your apostolic commission, continue to reprove and blame the Jews? for who hath resisted his will?" According to your own doctrine, he chooses the Gentiles and rejects us; his will is accomplished, not resisted: "why then doth he still find fault?" We may grant that the objection of the Jew goes upon the Calvinistic view of sovereignty and predestination, and the shutting out of all conditions; but then it is to be remembered, that it is the objection of a perverse and unbelieving Jew; and that it is refuted, not conceded, by the apostle; for he proceeds wholly to cut off all ground and pretence of "replying against God," by his reference to the parable of the potter in Jeremiah. This reference, according to the view we have already given of that parable, shows, 1. That "the vessel" was not made "unto dishonour," until the clay of which it was formed, had been "marred in the hand of the potter;" that is, not until trial being made, it did not conform to his design; did not work according to the pattern in his mind. This is immediately explained by the prophet; the nation did not "repent," and "turn from its wickedness," and therefore God dealt with them "as seemed good" to him. Thus, in the time of the apostle, the Jewish nation was the clay marred in the hands of God.—From its stubbornness and want of temper, it had not conformed to his

design of bringing it to the honourable form of a Christian Church association with the Gentiles. It was therefore made "a vessel dishonour," unchurched, and disowned of God, as its forefathers been in Babylon. This was the dishonoured, degraded condition, the unbelieving Jews in the apostle's day, although the destruction their city, and temple, and polity, had not taken place. They rejected from being the visible Church of God from the rending of veil of the temple, or at least, from the day of pentecost, when visibly took possession of his new spiritual Church, by the descent the Holy Ghost. But all this was their own "*fault*;" and therefore notwithstanding the objection of the perverse Jew, "fault" might found with them who refused the glory of a higher Church than that which their circumcision formerly gave; and which been so long and so affectionately offered to them; with men who not only would not enter "the kingdom of God" themselves, but tempted to hinder even the Gentiles from entering in, as far as their power.

2. The reference to the parable of the potter served to silence "replying against God" also; because, in the interpretation which Jeremiah gives of that parable, he represents even the vessel fitted unto dishonour, out of the mass which was "marred in the hand of the potter," as still within the reach of the Divine favour, upon repentance; and so the conduct of God to the Jews, instead of proceeding as the Jew in his objection supposes, upon rigid predestinarian and unconditional grounds, left their state still in their own hands: they had no need to remain vessels of dishonour, since the Christian Church was still open to them, with its higher than Jewish honours. The word of the Lord, by his prophet, immediately on his having visited the potter's house, declares that if a nation "repent," he will repent of the evil designed against, or brought upon it. The Jews in Babylon, although they were there in the form of *dishonoured vessels*, did repent; and of that dishonoured mass "vessels of honour" were again made, at their restoration to their own land. Instead of replying against God, they bowed to his judgments in silence; and, as we read in the prayer of Daniel, confessed them just. Every Jew had this option when the apostle wrote, and has it now; and therefore St. Paul does not here call upon the Jews, as persons hardened and derelict of God, to be silent, and own the justice of God; but as persons whose silent submission would be the first step to their recovery. Nor will they always, even as a people, remain vessels of dishonour; but be formed again on the potter's wheel as vessels of honour and glory, of which the return from Babylon was probably a type. The object of the apostle was, therefore, to silence a rebellious and perverse replying against God, by producing a conviction, both of his sovereign right to dispense his

favours as he pleases, and of his justice in inflicting punishments upon those who set themselves against his designs; and thus to bring the Jews to repentance.

3. What follows verse 22 serves farther, and by another view, to silence the objecting Jew. It was true, that the body of the Jewish people in Judea, and their polity would be destroyed: our Lord had predicted it; and the apostles frequently, but tenderly, advert to it. This prediction did not, however, prove that the Jews were, at the time the apostle wrote, generally, in a state of entire and hopeless dereliction; or the apostle would not so earnestly have sought, and so fervently have prayed for their salvation. Nor did that event itself prove, that those who still remained, and to this day remain, were given up entirely by God; for if so, why should the Church have been, in all ages, taught to look for their restoration: no time being fixed, and no signs established, to enable us to conclude that the dereliction had been taken off? The temporal punishment of the Jews of Judea had no connection with the question of their salvability as a people. To this sad national event, however, the apostle adverts, in the next verses.—"What," or *beside*, "if God, willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long suffering, the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had before prepared to glory, even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles. As he saith also in Osee, I will call them my people, who were not my people," &c, ver. 22–25. The apostle does not state his conclusion, but leaves it to be understood. He intended it manifestly, farther to silence the perverse objections of the Jews; and he gives it as a proof, not of sovereignty alone, but of sovereignty and justice, sovereign mercy to the Gentiles; but justice to the Jews: as though he had said, this procedure is also righteous, and leaves no room to reply against God.

The metaphor of "vessels" is still carried on; but by "vessels of dishonour, formed by the potter," and "vessels of wrath, fitted for destruction," he does not mean vessels in the same condition; but in different conditions. This is plain, from the difference of expression adopted: "vessels unto *dishonour*," and "vessels of *wrath*;" but as the apostle's reasoning is evidently influenced by the reference he has made to the parables of the potter, in the eighteenth and nineteenth chapters of Jeremiah, we must again refer to that prophecy for illustration. In all the examples which, in this discourse, St. Paul takes out of the Old Testament, it has been justly observed by critics, that he quotes briefly, and only so as to give to the Jews, who were well acquainted with their Scriptures, the key to the whole context in which the passages stand to which he directs their attention. So in the verses before us, by refer-

ring to the potter forming the vessels on the wheel, he directs them to the whole section of prophecy, of which that is the introduction. By examining this it will be found, that the prophet, in delivering his message, makes use of the work of the potter for illustration, in two states, and for two purposes. The first we have explained:—the giving to the mass, marred in the hands of the potter, another form; which expressed that dishonoured, and humbled state, in which the Jews, both *for punishment* and *correction*, were placed under captivity in Babylon. But connected with the humbling of this proud people, by rejecting them for seventy years, as God's visible Church, was also the terrible destruction of Jerusalem, and the temple itself. With reference to this, the prophet, in the nineteenth chapter, which is a continuation of the eighteenth, receives this command, "Thus saith the Lord, Go and get a *potter's earthen bottle*, and take of the ancients of the people, and the ancients of the priests; and go forth unto the valley of the sons of Hinnom, which is by the entry of the east gate, and proclaim there the words that I shall tell thee, and say, Hear ye the word of the Lord, O kings of Judah, and inhabitants of Jerusalem: Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; behold I will bring evil upon *this place*, the which whosoever heareth, his ears shall tingle." And then having delivered his awful message in various forms of malediction, he is thus commanded, in verse 10, "Then shalt thou break the bottle in the sight of the men that go with thee, and shalt say unto them, Thus saith the Lord of hosts; even so will I *break* this people and this city, *as one breaketh a potter's vessel*, that cannot be made whole again." As this stands in the same section of prophecy as the parable of the forming of vessels out of clay by the potter, can it be doubted to what the apostle refers when he speaks, not only of "vessels made unto dishonour," but also of "*vessels of wrath* fitted for destruction?" The potter's earthen bottle, broken by Jeremiah, was "a vessel of wrath fitted for destruction," though not in the intention of the potter who formed it; and the breaking or destruction of it represented, as the prophet himself says, the destruction of the city, temple, and polity of the Jews, by the invasion of the forces of the king of Babylon. The coming destruction of the temple, city, and polity of the Jews by the Romans was thereby fitly represented by the same figure in *words*, that is, the destruction of an earthen vessel by violent fracture, as the former calamity had been represented by it in *action*. Farther, the circumstances of these two great national punishments signally answer to each other. In the former, the Jews ceased to be the visible Church of God for seventy years; in the latter, they have been also unchurched for many ages. Their temporary rejection as the visible Church of God when they were taken into captivity by Nebuchadnezzar, was marked, also, by circumstances of severe and terrible vengeance, by invasion, and the destruction of their

political state. Their longer rejection, as God's Church, was also accompanied by judgments of the same kind, and by their more terrible excision and dispersion, as a body politic. As the prophet refers to both circumstances, so, in his usual manner of teaching by action, he illustrates both by symbols. The first, by the work of the potter on the wheels; the second, by taking "an earthen bottle, a vessel out of the house of the potter, and destroying it before the eyes of the ancients of the people and the ancients of the priests." The apostle, in like manner, refers to both events, and makes use of the same symbols verbally. The "dishonoured" state of the Jews, as no longer acknowledged by God as his people, since they would not enter the new Church, the New Jerusalem, *by faith*, is shown by the vessel formed by the potter unto "dishonour;" the collateral calamities brought upon their city, temple, and nation, arising out of their enormous sins, is shown by allusion to the prophet's breaking another vessel, an earthen bottle. This temporal destruction of the Jews by the Roman invasion, was also figurative of the future and final punishment of all persevering unbelievers. As to the Jews of that day living in Judea, the *nation* of the Jews, the punishment figured by the broken vessel was final, for they were destroyed by the sword, and wasted by slavery; and as to all who persevered in unbelief, the future punishment in eternity would be final and hopeless, "as one breaketh a potter's vessel that cannot be *made whole again*:" a sufficient proof that St. Paul is not speaking of the vessel in its state of *clay*, on the potter's wheel, which might be made whole again; and, therefore, the punishment figured by that was not final, but corrective; for the Jews, though made vessels unto dishonour in Babylon, were again made vessels of honour on their restoration; and the Jews now, though for a much longer period existing as "vessels of dishonour," shall be finally restored, brought into the Church of Christ, acknowledged to be his people, as the believing Gentiles are, and thus, united with them, again be made "vessels unto honour."

The application of the apostle's words, in the verses just commented upon, as intended to silence the "replying" of the Jews against God, is now obvious. They could urge no charge upon God for making them vessels of dishonour by taking away their Church state, for that was their own fault; they were "marred in his hands," and they yielded not to his design. But their case was no more hopeless than that of the Jews in Babylon; they might still be again made vessels of honour. And then, as to the case of the "vessels of wrath fitted for destruction," those stubborn Jews who were bringing upon themselves the Roman invasion, with the destruction of their city and nation; and all perverse, unbelieving Jews, who continued, in other parts of the world, to reject the Gospel; although their approaching punishment would be final and remediless, yet was there no ground for them "to reply against God"

on that account, as though this dispensation of wrath were the result of unconditional predestination and rigid sovereignty. On the contrary, it was an act of pure and unquestionable justice, which the apostle proves by its being brought upon themselves by their own sins; and by the circumstance that it did not take place until after God had "endured them with much long suffering."

1. The destruction was brought upon themselves by their own sins. This is manifest from all the instances in the New Testament, in which their sins are charged upon them as the cause of their calamities, and which need not be quoted; and also from the expression in the text before us, vessels "*fitted* to destruction." The word might as well have been rendered "*adapted* to destruction," which fitness or congruity for punishment can be produced only by sin; and this sin must have been their own choice and fault, unless we should blasphemously make God the author of sin, which but a few Calvinistic divines have been bold enough to affirm. Nor are we to overlook the change of speech which the apostle uses (*Wolfius in loc.*) when speaking of "the vessels of mercy." Their "preparation unto glory," is ascribed expressly to God,—"which HE had afore prepared unto glory;" but of the vessels of wrath the apostle simply says passively, "fitted to destruction," leaving the agent to be inferred from the nature of the thing, and from the testimony of Scripture, which uniformly ascribes the sins of men to themselves, and their punishment to their sins.

2. The justice of God's proceeding as to the incorrigible Jews is still more strongly marked by the declaration, that these vessels of wrath fitted, or adapted to destruction, were "endured with much *long suffering*." To say that their punishment was delayed to render it more conspicuous, after they had been left or given up by God, would be no impeachment of God's justice; but it is much more consonant to the tenor of Scripture to consider the "long suffering" here mentioned, as exercised previously to their being given up to the hardness of their hearts, like Pharaoh, and even after they were, in a rigid construction of just severity, "fitted for destruction:" the punishment being delayed to afford them still farther opportunities for repentance. The barren tree, in our Lord's parable, was the emblem of the Jewish nation, and no one can deny that after the Lord had come for many years "seeking fruit and finding none," this fruitless tree was "fitted" to be cut down; and yet it was "endured with much long suffering." This view is, also, farther supported by the import of the word "long suffering," and its use in the New Testament. Long suffering is a mode of *mercy*, and the reason of its exercise is only to be found in a merciful *intention*. Hence "goodness and forbearance, and long suffering," are united by the apostle, in another part of this epistle, when speaking of these very Jews, in a passage which may be considered as strictly

e. with that before us. "Or despisest thou the riches of his ness and *forbearance*, and *long suffering*; not knowing that the ness of God *leadeth thee to repentance?* But after thy hardness and penitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath againt the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of GOD;" which "wrath" the long suffering of God was exercised to prevent, by leading them "to repentance," Rom. ii, 4, 5. So also St. Peter teaches us, that the end of God's long suffering to men is a merciful one: he is "long suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to *repentance*." The passage in question, therefore, cannot be understood of persons derelict and forsaken of God, as though the long suffering of God, in enduring them, were a part of the process of "showing his wrath and making his power known." Doddridge, a moderate Calvinist, paraphrases it: "What if God, resolving" at last "to manifest his wrath, and make his power known, hath," *in the meantime*, "endured with much long suffering" *those who shall finally appear to be* "the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction?" to which there is no objection, provided it be allowed that in this "*meantime*" they might have repented and obtained mercy.

Thus the proceedings of God as to the Jews shut out all "reply" and "debate" with God. Nothing was unjust in his conduct to the impenitent among them, for they were "vessels of wrath fitted for destruction," wicked men, justly liable to it, and yet, before God proceeded to his work of judgment, he endured them with forbearance, and gave them many opportunities of coming into his Church on the new election of believers both of Jews and Gentiles. And as to this election, the whole was a question not of justice but of grace, and God had the unquestionable right of forming a new believing people, "not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles," and of filling them, as "vessels of honour," with those riches, that fulness of glory, as his now acknowledged Church, for which he had "afore prepared them" by faith, the only ground of their admission into his covenant. The remainder of the chapter, on which we have commented, contains citations from the prophecies, with respect to the salvation of the "remnant," of the believing Jews, and the calling of the Gentiles. The tenth and eleventh chapters which continue the discourse, need no particular examination; but will be found to contain nothing but what most obviously refers to the collective rejection of the Jewish nation, and the collective election of the "remnant" of believing Jews, along with all believing Gentiles, into the visible Church of God.

We have now considered this discourse of the Apostle Paul, with reference to the question of personal or collective election, and find that it can be interpreted only of the latter. Let us consider it, secondly, with reference to the question of *unconditional* election, a doctrine which

we shall certainly find in it; but in a sense very different from that in which it is held by Calvinists.

By unconditional election, divines of this class understand an election of persons to eternal life without respect to their faith or obedience, these qualities in them being supposed necessarily to follow as consequences of their election; by unconditional reprobation, the counterpart of the former doctrine, is meant a non-election or rejection of certain persons from eternal salvation; unbelief and disobedience following this rejection as necessary consequences. Such kind of election and rejection has no place in this chapter, although the subject of it is the election and rejection of bodies of men, which is a case more unfettered with conditions than any other. We have, indeed, in it several instances of unconditional election. Such was that of the descendants of Isaac to be God's visible Church, in preference to those of Ishmael; such was that of Jacob, to the exclusion of Esau; which election was declared when the children were yet in the womb, before they had done "good or evil;" so that the blessing of the special covenant did not descend upon the posterity of Jacob because of any righteousness in Jacob, nor was it taken away from the descendants of Esau because of any wickedness in their progenitor. In like manner, when almighty God determined no longer to found his visible Church upon natural descent from Abraham in the line of Isaac and Jacob, nor in any line according to the flesh; but to make faith in his Son Jesus Christ the gate of admission into this privilege, he acted according to the same sovereign pleasure. It is not impossible to conceive that he might have carried on his saving purposes among the Gentiles through Christ, without setting up a visible Church among them; as, before the coming of Christ, he carried on such purposes in the Gentile nations, (unless we suppose that all but the Jews perished,) without collecting them into a body, and making himself their head as his Church, and calling himself "their God" by special covenant, and by visible and constant signs acknowledging them to be "his people." Greatly inferior would have been the mercy to the Gentile world had this plan been adopted: and, as far as it appears to us, the system of Christianity would have been much less efficient. We are, indeed, bound to believe this, since Divine wisdom and goodness have determined on another mode of procedure; but still it is conceivable. On the contrary, the purpose of God was now not only to continue a visible Church in the world, but to extend it in its visible, collective, and organized form, into all nations. Yet this resolve rested on no goodness in those who were to be subjects of it: both Jews and Gentiles were "concluded under sin," and "the whole world was guilty before God." As this plan is carried into effect by extending itself into different nations, we see the same sovereign pleasure. A man of Macedonia appears to Paul in a vision by night, and cries, "Come over and

help us;' but we have no reason to believe that the Macedonians were better than other Gentiles, although they were *elected* to the enjoyment of the privileges and advantages of evangelical ordinances. So in modern times parts of Hindostan have been *elected* to receive the Gospel, and yet its inhabitants presented nothing more worthy of this election than the people of Tibet, or California, who have not yet been elected. We call this sovereignty; not indeed in the sense of many Calvinistic writers, who appear to understand by the sovereign acts of God those procedures which he adopts only to show that he has the power to execute them; but because the reasons of them, whether they are reasons of judgment, or wisdom, or mercy, are hidden from us—either that we have no immediate interest in them, or that they are too deep and ample for our comprehension, or because it is an important lesson for men to be taught to bow with reverent submission to his regal prerogatives. This is the unconditional election and non-election taught by the apostle in this chapter, but what we deny is, that either the spiritual blessings connected with religious privileges follow as necessary consequences from this election; or that unbelief, disobedience, and eternal ruin follow in the same manner from non-election. Of both these opinions the apostle's discourse itself furnishes abundant refutation.

Let us take the instances of election. The descendants of Abraham in the line of Isaac and Jacob were elected; but true faith, and obedience, and salvation, did not follow as infallible consequents of that election. On the contrary, the "Jew outwardly," and the "Jew inwardly," were always distinguished in the sight of God; and the children of Abraham's faith, not the children of Abraham's body, were the true "Israel of God." Again, the Gentiles were at length elected to be the visible Church of God; but obedience and salvation did not follow as necessary consequents of this election. On the contrary, many Gentiles chosen to special religious privileges have, in all ages, neglected the great salvation, and have perished, though professing the name of Christ; and in that pure age in which St. Paul wrote, when comparatively few Gentiles entered the Church but with a sincere faith in Christ, he warns all of the danger of excision for unbelief and disobedience:—"Thou standest by faith; be not high minded, but fear." "For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee." "Toward thee goodness, if thou continue in his goodness; otherwise thou also shalt be cut off." Certain, therefore, it is, that although this collective election of bodies of men to religious privileges, and to become the visible Church of God, be unconditional, the salvation to which these privileges were designed to lead, depends upon personal faith and obedience.

Let us turn, then, to the instances of non-election or rejection; and here it will be found that unbelief, disobedience, and punishment, do not

follow as infallible consequents of this dispensation. Abraham was greatly interested for Ishmael, and obtained, in answer to his prayer, at least temporal promises in his behalf, and in that of his posterity; and there is no reason to conclude from any thing which occurs in the sacred writers, that his Arabian descendants were shut out, except by their own choice and fault, at any time, from the hopes of salvation; at least previous to their embracing the imposture of Mohammed; for if so, we must give up Job and his friends as reprobates. The knowledge of the true God existed long in Arabia; and "Arabians" were among the fruits of primitive Christianity, as we learn from the Acts of the Apostles.

Nor have we any ground to conclude that the Edomites, as such, were excluded from the mercies of God, because of their non-election as his visible Church. Their proximity to the Jewish nation must have served to preserve among them a considerable degree of religious knowledge; and their continuance as a people for many ages may argue at least no great enormity of wickedness among them; which is confirmed by the reasons given for their ultimate destruction. The final malediction against this people is uttered by the Prophet Malachi:—"Whereas Edom saith, We are impoverished, but we will return and build the desolate places; thus saith the Lord of hosts, They shall build, but I will throw down; and they shall call them the BORDER OF WICKEDNESS, and the people against whom the Lord hath indignation for ever," i, 4. Thus their destruction was the result of their "wickedness" in the later periods of their history; nor have we any reason to conclude that this was more inevitable than that of other ancient nations, whom God, as in the case of Assyria, called to repentance; but who, not regarding the call, were finally destroyed. That the Edomites were not, in more ancient times, the objects of the Divine displeasure, is manifest from Deut. ii, 5, where it is recorded that God commanded the Israelites, "Meddle not with them; for I will not give you of their land, no, not so much as a foot breadth; because I have given Mount Seir unto Esau for a possession." They also outlived, as a people, the ten tribes of Israel; they continued to exist when the two tribes were carried into captivity to Babylon; and about the year of the world 3875, or 129 before the Christian era, John Hircanus entirely subdued them, and obliged them to incorporate with the Jewish nation and to receive religion. They professed consequently the same faith, and were thus connected with the visible Church of God. (3)

(3) "Having conquered the Edomites, or Idumeans," says Prideaux, "he reduced them to this necessity, either to *embrace the Jewish religion*, or else to leave the country, and seek new dwellings elsewhere; whereon, choosing rather to leave their idolatry than their country, they all became proselytes to the Jewish religion," &c. (*Connex.* vol. iii, pp. 365, 366.)

We come, finally, to the case of the rejected Jews in the very age of the apostles. The purpose of God, as we have seen, was to abolish the former ground on which his visible Church had for so many ages been built, that of natural descent from Abraham by Isaac and Jacob; but this was so far from shutting out the Jews from spiritual blessings, that though, *as Jews*, they were now denied to be God's Church, yet they were all invited to come in with the Gentiles, or rather to lead the way into the new Church established on the new principle of faith in Jesus, as the Christ. Hence the apostles were commanded to "begin at Jerusalem" to preach the Gospel; hence they made the Jews the first offer in every place in Asia Minor, and other parts of the Roman empire, into which they travelled on the same blessed errand. Many of the Jews accepted the call, entered into the Church state on the new principle on which the Church of Christ was now to be *elected*, and hence they are called, by St. Paul, "the *remnant* according to the election of grace," Rom. xi, 5, and "*the election*." The rest, it is true, are said to have been "blinded;" just in the same sense as Pharaoh was hardened. He hardened his own heart, and was judicially left to his obduracy; they blinded themselves by their prejudices and worldliness and spiritual pride, and were at length judicially given up to blindness. But then might they not all have had a share in this new election into this new Church of God? Truly every one of them; for thus the apostle argues, Rom. ix, 30–32, "What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith; but Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness. *Wherefore?* BECAUSE THEY SOUGHT IT NOT BY FAITH, but, as it were, by the works of the law." And thus we have it plainly declared that they were excluded from the new spiritual Church of God, not by any act of sovereignty, not by any decree of reprobation, but by an act of their own: they rejected the doctrine and way of faith; they attained not unto righteousness, *because* they sought it not by faith.

The collective election and rejection taught in this chapter is not then unconditional, in the sense of the Calvinists; and neither the salvation of the people elected, nor the condemnation of the people rejected, flows as necessary consequents from these acts of the Divine sovereignty. They are, indeed, mysterious procedures; for doubtless it must be allowed that they place some portions of men in circumstances more favoured than others; but even in such cases God has shut out the charge of "*unrighteousness*," by requiring from men according "to what they have, and not according to what they have not," as we learn from many parts of Scripture which reveal the *principles* of the Divine administration, both as to this life and another; for no man is shut out from the mercy of God, but by his own fault. He has connected these

events also with *wise and gracious general plans*, as to the human race. They are not acts of arbitrary will, or of caprice; they are acts of "wisdom and knowledge," the mysterious bearings of which are to be in future times developed. "O the depth, both of the *wisdom* and *knowledge* of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" These are the devout expressions with which St. Paul concludes this discourse; but they would ill apply to the sovereign, arbitrary, and unconditional reprobation of men from God's mercies in time and eternity, on the principle of taking some and leaving others without any reason in themselves. There is no *plan* in this; no wisdom; no mystery; and it is capable of no farther development for the instruction and benefit of the world; for that which rests originally on no reason but solely on arbitrary will, is incapable, from its very nature, of becoming the component part of a deeply laid, and, for a time, mysterious *plan*, which is to be brightened into manifest wisdom, and to terminate in the good of mankind, and the glory of God.

The only argument of any weight which is urged to prove, that in the election spoken of in this discourse of St. Paul, individuals are intended, is, that though it should be allowed that the apostle is speaking of the election of bodies of men to be the visible Church of God; yet, as none are acknowledged by him to be his true Church, except true believers; therefore, the election of men to faith and eternal life, as individuals, must necessarily be included; or rather, is the main thing spoken of. For as the spiritual seed of Abraham were the only persons allowed to be "the Israel of God" under the Old Testament dispensation; and as, upon the rejection of the Jews, true believers only, both of Jews and Gentiles, were allowed to constitute the Church of Christ, the spiritual seed of Abraham, under the law; and genuine Christians, both of Jews and Gentiles, under the Gospel, are "*the election*;" and "*the remnant according to the election of grace*," mentioned by the apostle.

In this argument truth is greatly mixed up with error, which a few observations will disentangle.

1. It is a mere assumption, that the spiritual Israelites, under the law, in opposition to the Israelites by birth, are any where called "the election;" and "the remnant according to the election of grace;" or even alluded to under these titles. The first phrase occurs in Romans xi, 7, "What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the *election* hath obtained it, and the *rest* were blinded." Here it is evident that "the election" means the Jews of that day, who believed in Christ, in opposition to "the rest," who believed not; in other words, "the election" was that part of the Jews, who had been chosen into the Christian Church, by faith. The second phrase occurs in verse 5, of the same chapter, "Even so, then, at *this present* time, also, there is a *remnant* according to the election of grace;" where the same class of

, the believing Jews, who submitted to the plan of election into urch by "*grace*," through faith, are the only persons spoken of. e these terms used to designate the believing Gentiles; they exclusively to the Christianized portion of the Jewish nation, and contrary assumption is without any foundation, the inferences from it are imaginary.

t is true that, under the Old Testament dispensation, the *spiritual* Abraham were the only part of the Israelites who were, with to their spiritual and eternal state, accepted of God; but it is that the election of which the apostle speaks, was confined to With reference to Esau and Jacob, the apostle says, Romans 13, "For the children being not yet born, neither having od or evil, that the purpose of God, *according to election*, might ot of works, but of him that calleth; it was said unto her, The all serve the younger; as it is written, Jacob have I loved, but ve I hated." The "election" here spoken of, or God's purpose , relates to Jacob being chosen in preference to Esau; which , as we have seen, respected the descendants of Jacob. Now, eant the election of the pious descendants of Jacob only, and natural descendants; then the opposition between the election rogeny of Jacob, and the non-election of the progeny of Esau, yed; and there was no reason to say, "Jacob have I loved, but ve I hated," or loved less; but the pious descendants of Jacob loved and elected; and the rest I have not loved, and therefore t elected. Some of the Calvinistic commentators have felt this y, and therefore say, that these cases are not given as *examples* election and reprobation of which the apostle speaks; but as *ions* of it. If considered as illustrations, they must be felt to be y perplexing kind; for how the preference of one nation to an- hen, as we have seen, this did not infallibly secure the salva- he more favoured nation, nor the eternal destruction of the less d, can illustrate the election of individuals to eternal life, and the tion of other individuals to eternal death, is difficult to conceive. y are manifestly *examples* of that *one election*, of which the speaks throughout; and not illustrations of one kind of election her. They are the *instances* which he gives in proof that the of the believing Jews of his day to be, along with the believing , the visible Church of God, and the rejection of the Jews after h, was not contrary to the promises of God made to Abraham; God had, in former times, made distinctions between the natu- endants of Abraham as to Church privileges, without any ment of his faithfulness to his word. Again, if the election of he apostle speaks were that of pious Jews in all ages, so that they od in a Church relation to God, and were thus the only Jews

in covenant with him; how could he speak of the *rejection* of the other portion of the Jews? Of their being *cut off*? Of the *covenants* "pertaining" to them? They could not be rejected, who were never received; nor cut off, who were never branches in the stock; nor have covenants pertaining to them, if in those covenants they had never been included.

3. This notion, that the ancient election of a part of the descendants of Abraham spoken of by the apostle, was of the pious Jews only, and, therefore, a personal election is, in part, grounded by these commentators upon a mistaken view of the meaning of the sixth, seventh, eighth, and ninth verses in this chapter; in which they have been sometimes incautiously followed by those of very different sentiments, and who have thus somewhat entangled themselves. "Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel which are of Israel: neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed. For this is the word of promise, At this time will I come, and Sarah shall have a son." In this passage, the interpreters in question suppose that St. Paul distinguishes between the spiritual Israelites, and those of natural descent; between the spiritual seed of Abraham, and his seed according to the flesh. Yet the passage not only affords no evidence that this was his intention; but implies just the contrary. Our view of its meaning is given above; but it may be necessary to support it more fully.

Let it then be recollected that the apostle is speaking of that great event, the rejection of the Jews from being any longer the visible Church of God, on account of natural descent; and that in this passage he shows that the purpose of God to construct his Church upon a new basis, that of faith in Christ, although it would exclude the body of the Jewish people from this Church, since they refused "the election of grace" through faith, would not prove that "the word of God had fallen" to the ground; or, as the literal meaning of the original is rendered in our version, "has taken none effect." The word of God referred to can only be God's original promise to Abraham, to be "a God to him and to his seed after him;" which was often repeated to the Jews in after ages, in the covenant engagement, "I will be to you a God, and ye shall be to me a people;" a mode of expression which signifies, in all the connections in which it stands, an engagement to acknowledge them as his visible Church; he being publicly acknowledged on their part as "their God," or object of worship and trust; and they, on the other, being acknowledged by him as his peculiar "people." This, therefore, we are to take to be the sense of the promise to Abraham and to his seed. How then does the apostle prove

that the "word of God had not fallen to the ground," although the natural seed of Abraham, the Jews of that day, had been rejected as his Church? He proves it by showing that all the children of Abraham by natural descent had not, in the original intention of the promise, been "counted," or reckoned, as "the seed" to which these promises had been made; and this he establishes by referring to those acts of God by which he had, in his sovereign pleasure, conferred the Church relation upon the descendants of Abraham only in certain lines, as in those of Isaac and Jacob, and excluded the others. In this view, the argument is cogent to his purpose. By the exercise of the same sovereignty God had now resolved not to connect the Church relation with natural descent, even in the line of Isaac and Jacob; but to establish it on a ground which might comprehend the Gentile nations also, the common ground of faith in Christ. The mere children of the *flesh* were, therefore, in this instance excluded; and "the children of the promise," the promise now made to believing Jews and Gentiles, those begotten by the word of the Gospel, were "counted for the seed." But though it is a great truth that only the children of the Gospel promise are now "counted for the seed," it does not follow that the children of the promise made to Sarah were all spiritual persons; and, as such, the only subjects of that Church relation which was connected with that circumstance. That the Gentiles who believed upon the publication of the Gospel were always contemplated as a part of that seed to which the promises were made, the apostle shows in a former part of the same epistle; but that "mystery" was not in early times revealed. God had not then formed, nor did he till the apostle's age form, his visible Church solely on the principle of faith, and a moral relation. This is the character of the new, not of the old dispensation; and the different grounds of the Church relation were suited to the design of each. One was to preserve truth from extinction; the other to extend it into all nations: in one, therefore, a single people, taken as a nation into political as well as religious relations with God, was made the deposite of the truth to be preserved; in the other, a national distinction, and lines of natural descent, could not be recognized, because the object was to call all nations to the obedience of the same faith, and to place all on an equality before God. As the very ground of the Church relation, then, under the Old Testament, was natural descent from Abraham; and as it was mixed up and even identified with a political relation also, the ancient election of which the apostle speaks could not be confined to spiritual Jews; and even if it could be proved, that the Church of God, under the new dispensation is to be confined to true believers only, yet that would not prove that the ancient Church of God had that basis alone, since we know it had another, and a more general one. When, therefore, the apostle says, "for they are not all Israel, which are of

Israel," the distinction is not between the spiritual and the natural Israelites; but between that part of the Israelites who continued to enjoy Church privileges, and those who were "of Israel," or descendants of Jacob, surnamed Israel, as the ten tribes and parts of the two, who, being dispersed among the heathen for their sins, were no longer a part of God's visible Church. This is the first instance which the apostle gives of the rejection of a part of the natural seed of Abraham from the promise. He strengthens the argument by going up higher, even to those who had immediately been born to Abraham, the very children of his body, Ishmael and Isaac. "The children of *the flesh*;" that is, Ishmael and his descendants, (so called, because he was born naturally, not supernaturally, as Isaac was, according to "the promise" made to Abraham and Sarah;)—they, says the apostle, are not the "children of God;" that is, as the context still shows, not "the seed" to whom the promise that he would be "a God to Abraham and his seed" was made: "but the children of the promise," that is, Isaac and his descendants, were "counted for the seed." And that we might not mistake this, "the promise" referred to is added by the apostle;—"for this is the word of the promise, At this time will I come, and Sarah shall have a son." Of this promise, the Israelites by natural descent, were as much "*the children*," as the spiritual Israelites; and, therefore, to confine it to the latter is wholly gratuitous, and contrary to the words of the apostle. It is indeed an interesting truth, that a deep and spiritual mystery ran through that part of the history of Abraham here referred to, which the apostle opens in his Epistle to the Galatians: "The children of the bond woman and her son," symbolized the Jews who sought justification by the law; and "the children of the promise," "the children of the free woman," those who were justified by faith, and born supernaturally, that is, "born again," and made heirs of the heavenly inheritance. But these things, says St. Paul, are an "ALLEGORY;" and therefore could not be the thing allegorized, any more than a type can be the thing typified; for a type is always of an inferior nature to the antitype, and is indeed something earthly, adumbrating that which is spiritual and heavenly. It follows, therefore, that although the choosing of Isaac and his descendants prefigured the choosing of true believers, (persons born supernaturally under the Gospel dispensation,) to be "the children of God;" and that the rejection of the "children of the flesh," typified the rejection of the unbelieving Jews from God's Church, because they had nothing but natural descent to plead; nay, though we allow that these events might be *allegorical*, on one part, of the truly believing Israelites, in all ages; and on the other, of those who were Jews only "outwardly," and, therefore, as to the heavenly inheritance were not "heirs;" yet still that which typified, and represented in allegory these spiritual mysteries, was not the spiritual mystery itself. It was a comparatively gross

and earthly representation of it; and the passage is, therefore, to be understood of the election of the natural descendants of Isaac, as the children of the promise made to Sarah, to be "the seed" to which the promises of Church privileges and a Church relation were intended to be in force though still subject to the election of the line of Jacob in preference to that of Esau; and subject again, at a still greater distance of time, to the election of the tribe of Judah, to continue God's visible Church, till the coming of Messiah, while the ten tribes, who were equally "of Israel," were rejected.

4. That this election of bodies of men to be the visible Church of God, involved the election of individuals into the true Church of God, and consequently their election to eternal life, is readily acknowledged; but this weakens not in the least the arguments by which we have shown that the apostle, in this chapter, speaks of collective, and not of individual election; on the contrary, it establishes them. Let us, to illustrate this, first take the case of the ancient Jewish Church.

The end of God's election of bodies of men to peculiar religious advantages is, doubtless as to the individuals of which these bodies are composed, their recovery from sin, and their eternal salvation. Hence, to all such individuals, superior means of instruction, and more efficient means of salvation are afforded along with a deeper responsibility. The election of an individual into the true Church by writing his name in heaven is, however, an effect dependent upon the election of the body to which he belongs. It follows only from his personal repentance, and justifying faith; or else we must say, that men are members of the true spiritual Church, before they repent and have justifying faith, for which, assuredly, we have no warrant in Scripture. Individual election is then another act of God, subsequent to the former. The former is sovereign and unconditional; the latter rests upon revealed reasons; and is not, as we shall just now more fully show, unconditional. These two kinds of election, therefore, are not to be confounded; and it is absurd to argue that collective election has no existence because there is an individual election; since the latter, on the contrary, necessarily supposes the former. The Jews, as a body, had their visible Church state, and outward privileges, although the pious Jews alone availed themselves of them to their own personal salvation. As to the Christian Church, there is a great difference in its circumstances; but the principle, though modified, is still there.

The basis of this Church was to be, not natural descent from a common head; marking out, as that Church, some distinct family, tribe, and, as it increased in numbers, some one nation, invested too, as a nation must be, with a political character and state; but faith in Christ. Yet even this faith supposes a previous sovereign and unconditional collective election. For, as the apostle argues, "faith cometh by hear-

ing, and hearing by the word of God: but how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach except they be sent?" Now this *sending* to one Gentile nation before another Gentile nation, a distinction which continues to be made in the administration of the Divine government to this day, is that sovereign unconditional election of the people constituting that nation, to the means of becoming God's Church by the preaching of the Gospel, through the men "*sent*" to them for this purpose. The persons who first believed were for the most part real Christians, in the sense of being truly, and in heart turned to God. They could not generally go so far as to be baptized into the name of Christ, in the face of persecution, and in opposition to their own former prejudices, without a considerable previous ripeness of experience, and decision of character. Under the character of "*saints*," in the highest sense, the primitive Churches are addressed in the apostolical epistles: and such we are bound to conclude they were; or they would not have been so called by men who had the "discernment of spirits." Whatever then the number was, whether small or great, who first received the word of the Gospel in every place, they openly confessed Christ, assembled for public worship; and thus the promise was fulfilled in them: "I will be to them a God," the object of worship and trust; "and they shall be to me a people." They became God's visible Church; and for the most part entered into that, and into the true and spiritual Church at the same time. But this was not the case with all the members; and we have therefore still an election of bodies of men to a visible Church state, independent of their election as "heirs of eternal life." The children of believers, even as children, and therefore incapable of faith, did not remain in the same state of alienation from God as the children of unbelievers; nay, though but one parent believed, yet the children are pronounced by St. Paul, to be "holy." "For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife by the husband: else were your children *unclean*; but now they are *holy*." When both parents believed, and trained up their families to believe in Christ, and to worship the true God, the case was stronger: the family was then "a Church in the house;" though all the members of it might not have saving faith. Sincere faith or assent to the Gospel, with desires of instruction and salvation, appear to have uniformly entitled the person to baptism; and the use of Christian ordinances followed. The numbers of the visible Church swelled till it comprehended cities, and at last countries; whose inhabitants were thus elected to special religious privileges, and, forsaking idols and worshipping God, constituted his visible Church among Gentile nations. And that the Apostle Paul regarded all who "called upon the name of the Lord" as Christian Churches, is evident from his asserting his authority of reproof, and counsel, and even excision over them, as to their un-

worthy members; and also from his threatening the Gentile Churches with the fate of the Jewish Church;—unless they stood by faith, they also should be "cut off;" that is, be unchurched. Of his full meaning, subsequent history gives the elucidation, in the case of those very Churches in Asia Minor which he himself planted; and which, departing from the faith of Christ, his true doctrine, have been, in many instances, "cut off," and swallowed up in the Mohammedan delusion; so that Christ is there no longer worshipped. The whole proves a sovereign unconditional election independent of personal election; unconditional as to the people to whom the Gospel was first sent; unconditional as to the children born of believing parents; unconditional as to the inhabitants of those countries who, when a Christian Church was first established among them, came, without seeking it, into the possession of invaluable and efficacious means and ordinances of Christian instruction and salvation; and who all finally, by education, became professors of the true faith; and, as far as assent goes, sincere believers. This election too, as in the Jewish Church, was made with reference to a personal election into the true spiritual Church of God; but personal election was conditional. It rested, as we have seen, upon personal repentance and justifying faith; or else we must hold that men could be members of the true Church without either. This election was then dependent upon the other; and, instead of disproving, abundantly confirms it. The tenor of the apostle's argument sufficiently shows that the transfer of the Church state and relation from one body of men to others, is that which in this discourse he has in view—in other words, he speaks of the election of bodies of men to religious advantages, not of individuals to eternal life; and however intimately the one may be connected with the other, the latter is not necessarily involved in the former; since superior religious privileges, in all ages have, to many, proved but an aggravation of their condemnation.

The THIRD kind of election is personal election; or the election of individuals to be the children of God, and the heirs of eternal life.

It is not at all disputed between us and those who hold the Calvinistic view of election, whether believers in Christ are called THE ELECT of God with reference to their individual state and individual relation to God as his "people," in the highest sense of that phrase. Such passages as "the elect of God;" "chosen of God;" "chosen in Christ;" "elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father;" and many others, we allow therefore, although borrowed from that collective election of which we have spoken, to be descriptive of an act of grace in favour of certain persons considered individually.

The first question then which naturally arises, respects the import of that act of grace which is termed choosing, or an election. It is not a choosing to particular offices and service, which is the first kind of

election we have mentioned; nor is it that collective election to religious privileges and a visible Church state, on which we have more largely dwelt. For although "the elect" have an individual interest in such a election as parts of the collective body, thus placed in possession of the ordinances of Christianity; yet many others have the same advantages who still remain under the guilt and condemnation of sin and practical unbelief. The individuals properly called "the elect," are they who have been made partakers of the grace and saving efficacy of the Gospel. "Many," says our Lord, "are *called*, but few *chosen*."

What true personal election is, we shall find explained in two clear passages of Scripture. It is explained negatively by our Lord, when he says to his disciples, "I have chosen you out of the world:" it is explained positively by St. Peter, when he addresses his first epistle to the "elect, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus." To be elected, therefore, is to be separated from "the world," and to be sanctified by the Spirit, and by the blood of Christ.

It follows, then, that election is not only an act of God done in time; but also that it is subsequent to the administration of the means of salvation. The "calling" goes before the "election;" the publication of the doctrine of "the Spirit," and the atonement, called by Peter "the sprinkling of the blood of Christ," before that "sanctification" through which they become "the elect" of God. The doctrine of *eternal election* is thus brought down to its true meaning. Actual election cannot be eternal; for, from eternity, the elect were not actually chosen out of the world, and from eternity, they could not be "sanctified unto obedience." The phrases, "eternal election," and "eternal decree of election," so often in the lips of Calvinists, can, in common sense, therefore, mean only an eternal *purpose* to elect; or a purpose formed *in eternity*, to elect, or choose out of the world, and sanctify *in time*, by "the Spirit and the blood of Jesus." This is a doctrine which no one will contend with them; but when they graft upon it another, that God hath, from eternity, "chosen in Christ unto salvation," a set number of men, "*certam quorundam hominum multitudinem*;" not upon foresight of faith and the obedience of faith, holiness, or of any other good quality, or disposition, (as a cause or condition before required in man to be chosen;) but unto faith, and the obedience of faith, holiness, &c, "*non ex praevisa fide, fideique obedientia, sanctitate, aut alia aliqua bona qua litate et dispositione*," &c, (*Judgment of the Synod of Dort*,) it presents itself under a different aspect, and requires an appeal to the word of God.

This view of election has two parts: it is the choosing of a *set or determinate* number of men, who cannot be increased or diminished; and it is *unconditional*. Let us consider each.

With respect to the first, there is no text of Scripture which teaches

that a fixed and determinate number of men are elected to eternal life; and the passages which the synod of Dort, adduce in proof, being such as they only *infer* the doctrine from, the synod themselves allow that they have no express Scriptural evidence for this tenet. But if there is no explicit scripture in favour of the opinion, there is much against it; and to this test it must, therefore, be brought.

The election here spoken of must either be election in eternity, or election in time. If the former, it can only mean a *purpose* of electing in time: if the latter, it is *actual* election, or choosing out of the world.

Now as to God's eternal purpose to elect, it is clear, that is a subject on which we can know nothing but from his own revelation. We take, then, the matter on this ground. A purpose to elect, is a purpose to save; and when it is explicitly declared in this revelation that God "willeth all men to be saved," and that "he willeth not the death of a sinner," either we must say, that his will is contrary to his purpose, which would be to charge God foolishly, and indeed has no meaning at all; or it agrees with his purpose: if then his will agrees with his purpose, that purpose was not confined to a "certain determinate number of men;" but extended to all "*whosoever*" should believe, that they might be elected and saved.

Again, we have established it as the doctrine of Scripture, that our Lord Jesus Christ died for all men, that all men through him might be saved; but if he died in order to their salvation through faith, he died in order to their election through faith; and God must have purposed this from eternity.

Farther, we have his own message to all to whom his servants preach the Gospel. They are commanded to preach "to every creature,"—"He that believeth shall be saved; and he that believeth not shall be damned." This is an unquestionable decree of God in time; and, if God be unchangeable, it was his decree, as touching this matter, from all eternity. But this decree or purpose can in no way be reconciled to the doctrine of an eternal purpose to elect only "a set and determinate number." For the Gospel could not be *good news* to "every creature" to whom it should be *as such* proclaimed, which is the first contradiction to the text. Nor would those who believe it not, but who are nevertheless commanded to believe it, have any power to believe it, which is the second contradiction: for since they are to be "damned" for not believing, they must have had the power to believe, or they could not have come into condemnation for an act impossible to them to perform, or else we must admit it as a principle of the Divine government that God commands his creatures to do, what under no circumstances they can do; and then punishes them for not doing what he thus commands. Finally, he commands those that believe not, and who are alleged not to be included in this "fixed number" of elected persons, to believe the

good tidings, as a matter in which they are interested: they are commanded to believe the Gospel as a truth; but if they are not interested in it, they are commanded to believe a falsehood, which is the third contradiction; and thus the text and the doctrine cannot consist together.

As the whole argument on this point is involved in what we have already established concerning the universal extent of the benefits of Christ's death, we may leave it to be determined by what has been advanced on that topic; observing only, that two of the points there confirmed bear directly upon the doctrine, that election is confined to a "fixed number of men." If we have proved from Scripture, that the reason of the condemnation of men lies in themselves, and not in the want of a sufficient and effectual provision having been made in Christ for their salvation, then the number of the actually elect might be *increased;* and if it has been established that those for whom Christ died might "perish;" and that true believers may "turn back unto perdition," and be "cast away," and fall into a state in which it were better for them "never to have known the way of righteousness," then the number of the elect may be *diminished.* To what has already been said on these subjects the reader is referred; and we shall now only mention a few of the difficulties with which the doctrine of an election from eternity of a determinate number of men to be made heirs of eternal life is attended.

Whether men will look to the dark and repugnant side of this doctrine of the eternal election of a certain number of men unto salvation, or not, it unavoidably follows from it, that all but the persons so chosen in Christ, are placed utterly and absolutely, from their very birth, out of the reach of salvation; and have no share at all in the saving mercies of God, who from eternity purposed to reject them, and that not for their fault as sinners. For all, except Adam and Eve, have come into the world with a nature which, left to itself, could not but sin; and as the determination of God, never to give the reprobate the means of avoiding sin, could not rest upon their *fault*, for what is absolutely inevitable cannot be charged on man as his fault, so it must rest where all the high Calvinistic divines place it,—upon the mere will and sovereign pleasure of God.

The difficulties of reconciling such a scheme as this to the nature of God, not as it is fancied by man, but as it is revealed in his own word; and to many other declarations of Scripture as to the principles of the administration both of his law and of his grace; one would suppose insuperable by any mind, and indeed, are so revolting, that few of those who cling to the doctrine of election will be found bold enough to keep them steadily in sight. They even think it uncandid for us who oppose these views to pursue them to their legitimate logical consequences. But in discussion this is inevitable; and if it be done in fairness, and in the spirit of candour, without pushing hard arguments into hard words,

the cause of truth, and a right understanding of the word of God, will thereby be promoted.

The doctrine of the election to eternal life only of a certain determinate number of men to salvation, involving, as it necessarily does, the doctrine of the absolute and unconditional reprobation of all the rest of mankind, cannot, we may confidently affirm, be reconciled,

1. To the LOVE of God. "God is love." "He is loving to *every man*: and his tender mercies are over *all* his works."

2. Nor to the WISDOM of God; for the bringing into being a vast number of intelligent creatures under a necessity of sinning, and of being eternally lost, teaches no moral lesson to the world; and contradicts all those notions of wisdom in the ends and processes of government which we are taught to look for, not only from natural reason, but from the Scriptures.

3. Nor to the GRACE of God, which is so often magnified in the Scriptures: "for doth it argue any sovereign or high strain; any superabounding richness of grace or mercy in any man, when ten thousand have equally offended him, only to pardon one or two of them?" (*Goodwin's Agreement and Difference.*) And on such a scheme can there be any interpretation given of the passage "that where sin had abounded, grace might much more abound?" or in what sense has "the grace of God appeared unto *all men*;" or even to one millionth part of them?

4. Nor can this merciless reprobation be reconciled to any of those numerous passages in which almighty God is represented as tenderly compassionate, and pitiful to the worst and most unworthy of his creatures, even them who finally perish. "I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth:" "Being grieved at the hardness of their hearts." "How often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not." "The Lord is long suffering to us-ward, not willing that *any* should perish." "Or despisest thou the *riches* of his *goodness*, and forbearance, and long suffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance."

5. It is as manifestly contrary to his JUSTICE. Here, indeed, we would not assume to measure this attribute of God by unauthorized human conceptions; but when God himself has appealed to those established notions of justice and equity which have been received among all enlightened persons, in all ages, as the measure and rule of his own, we cannot be charged with this presumption. "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do *right?*" "Are not my ways *equal?* saith the Lord." We may then be bold to affirm, that justice and equity in God are what they are taken to be among reasonable men; and if all men every where would condemn it, as most contrary to justice and right, that a sovereign should condemn to death one or more of his subjects, for not obeying laws which it is absolutely impossible for them, under any

circumstances which they can possibly avail themselves of, to obey, and much more the greater part of his subjects; and to require them, on pain of aggravated punishment, to do something in order to the pardon and remission of their offences, which he knows they cannot do, say to stop the tide or to remove a mountain: it implies a charge as awfully and obviously unjust against God, who is so "holy and just in all his doings," so exactly "just in the judgments which he executeth," as to silence all his creatures, to suppose him to act precisely in the same manner as to those whom he has passed by and rejected, without any avoidable fault of their own: to destroy them by the simple rule of his own sovereignty, or, in other words, to show that he has power to do it. In whatever light the subject be viewed, no fault, in any right construction, can be chargeable upon the persons so punished, or, as we may rather say, *destroyed*, since punishment supposes a judicial proceeding, which this act shuts out. For either the reprobates are destroyed for a pure reason of sovereignty, without any reference to their sinfulness, and thus all criminality is left out of the consideration; or they are destroyed for the sin of Adam, to which they were not consenting; or for personal faults resulting from a corruption of nature which they brought into the world with them, and which God wills not to correct, and they have no power to correct themselves. Every received notion of justice is thus violated. We grant, indeed, that some proceedings of the Almighty may appear at first irreconcilable with justice, which are not so; as that we should suffer pain and death, and be infected with a morally corrupt nature in consequence of the transgression of our first progenitors; that children should suffer for their parents' faults in the ordinary course of providence: and that, in general calamities, the comparatively innocent should suffer the same evils as the guilty. But none of these are parallel cases. For the "free gift" has come upon all men, "in order to justification of life," through "the righteousness" of the second Adam, so that the terms of our probation are but changed. None are doomed to inevitable ruin, or the above words of the apostle would have no meaning: and pain and death, as to all who avail themselves of the remedy, are made the instruments of a higher life, and of a superabounding of grace through Christ. The same observation may be made as to children who suffer evils for their parents' faults. This circumstance alters the terms of their probation: but if every condition of probation leaves to men the possibility and the hope of eternal life, and the circumstances of all are balanced and weighed by him who administers the affairs of individuals on principles, the end of which is to turn all the evils of life into spiritual and higher blessings, there is, obviously, no impeachment of justice in the circumstances of the probation assigned to any person whatever. As to the innocent suffering equally with the guilty in general calamities, the persons so suffering are but

COMPARATIVELY innocent, and their personal transgressions against God deserve a higher punishment than any which this life witnesses; this may also as to them be overruled for merciful purposes, and a future life presents its manifold compensations. But as to the non-elect, the whole case, in this scheme of sovereign reprobation, or sovereign preterition, is supposed to be before us. Their state is fixed, their afflictions in this life will not in any instance be overruled for ends of edification and salvation; they are left under a necessity of sinning in every condition; and a future life presents no compensation, but a fearful looking for of fiery and quenchless indignation. It is surely not possible for the ingenuity of man to reconcile this to any notion of just government which has ever obtained; and by the established notions of justice and equity in human affairs, *we are taught by the Scriptures themselves* to judge of the Divine proceedings in all *completely stated and comprehensible cases.*

6. Equally impossible is it to reconcile this notion to the SINCERITY of God in offering salvation by Christ to all who hear the Gospel, of whom this scheme supposes the majority, or at least great numbers, to be among the reprobate. The Gospel, as we have seen, is commanded to be preached to "every creature;" which publication of "good news to every creature," is an offer of salvation "to every creature," accompanied with earnest invitations to embrace it, and admonitory comminations lest any should neglect and despise it. But does it not involve a serious reflection upon the truth and sincerity of God which men ought to shudder at, to assume, at the very time the Gospel is thus preached, that no part of this good news was ever *designed* to benefit the majority, or any great part of those to whom it is addressed? that they to whom this love of God in Christ is proclaimed were never loved by God? that he has decreed that many to whom he offers salvation, and whom he invites to receive it, shall never be saved? and that he will consider their sins aggravated by rejecting that which they never could receive, and which he never designed them to receive? It is no answer to this to say, that we also admit that the offers of mercy are made by God to many whom he, by virtue of his prescience, knows will never receive them. We grant this; but, not now to enter upon the question of foreknowledge, it is enough to reply, that here there is no insincerity. On the Calvinian scheme the offer of salvation is made to those for whose sins Christ made no atonement; on ours, he made atonement for the sins of all. On the former, the offer is made to those whom GOD never designed to embrace it; on ours, to none but those whom God seriously and in truth wills that they should avail themselves of it; on their theory, the bar to the salvation of the non-elect lies in the want of a provided sacrifice for sin; on ours, it rests solely in men themselves: one consists, therefore, with a perfect sincerity of offer, the other cannot be

maintained without bringing the sincerity of God into question, and fixing a stigma upon his moral truth.

7. Unconditional *reprobation* cannot be reconciled with that frequent declaration of Scripture, that GOD IS NO RESPECTER OF PERSONS. This phrase, we grant, is not to be interpreted as though the bounties of the Almighty were dispensed in equal measures to his creatures. In the administration of favour, there is place for the exercise of that prerogative which, in a just sense, is called the sovereignty of GOD; but *justice* knows but of one rule; it is, in its nature, settled and fixed, and respects not the PERSON, but the CASE. "To have respect of persons" is a phrase, therefore, in Scripture, which sometimes refers to judicial proceedings, and signifies to judge from partiality and affection, and not upon the merits of the question. It is also used by St. Peter with reference to the acceptance of Cornelius:—"Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation, he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him." Here it is clear, that to respect persons, would be to reject or accept them without regard to their moral qualities, and on some national or other prejudice or partiality which forms no moral rule of any kind. But if the doctrine of absolute election and reprobation be true; if we are to understand that men like Jacob and Esau, in the Calvinistic construction of the passage, while in the womb of their mother, nay, from eternity, are loved and hated, elected or reprobated, before they have done "good or evil," then it necessarily follows, that there is precisely this kind of respect of persons with God; for his acceptance or rejection of men stands on some ground of aversion or dislike, which cannot be resolved into any *moral rule*, and has no respect to the *merits of the case itself;* and if the Scripture affirms that there is no such respect of persons with God, then the doctrine which implies it is contradicted by inspired authority.

8. The doctrine of which we are showing the difficulties, brings with it the repulsive and shocking opinion of the ETERNAL PUNISHMENT OF INFANTS. Some Calvinists have, indeed, to get rid of the difficulty, or rather to put it out of sight, consigned them to annihilation; but of the annihilation of any human being there is no intimation in the word of God. In order, therefore, to avoid the fearful consequence of admitting the punishment of beings innocent as to all actual sin, there is no other way than to suppose all children dying in infancy to be an elected portion of mankind, which, however, would be a mere hypothesis brought in to serve a theory without any evidence. That some of those who, as they suppose, are under this sentence of reprobation, die in their infancy, is, probably, what most Calvinists allow; and if their doctrine be received cannot be denied; and it follows, therefore, that all such infants are eternally lost. Now we know that infants are not lost, because our Lord gave it as a reason why little children ought not to be

hindered from coming unto him, that "of such is the kingdom of heaven." On which Calvin himself remarks, (*Harm.* in Matt. xix, 13,) "in this word, 'for of such is the kingdom of heaven,' Christ comprehends as well *little children themselves*, as those who in disposition *resemble* them. Hac voce, tam parvulos, quam eorum similes, comprehendit." We are assured of the salvation of infants, also, because "the free gift has come upon all men to [in order to] justification of life," and because children are not capable of rejecting that blessing, and must, therefore, derive benefit from it. The point, also, on which we have just now touched, that "there is no respect of persons with God," demonstrates it. For, as it will be acknowledged that some children, dying in infancy, are saved, it must follow, from this principle and axiom in the Divine government, that all infants are saved: for the case of all infants, as to innocence or guilt, sin or righteousness, being the same, and God, as a judge, being "no respecter of persons," but regarding only the merits of the case; he cannot make this awful distinction as to them, that one part shall be eternally saved and the other eternally lost. That doctrine, therefore, which implies the perdition of infants cannot be congruous to the Scriptures of truth; but is utterly abhorrent to them. (*On the case of infants, see* part ii, p. 57.)

9. Finally, not to multiply these instances of the difficulties which accompany the doctrine of absolute reprobation, or of preterition, (to use the milder term, though the argument is not in the least changed by it,) it destroys the end of PUNITIVE JUSTICE. That end can only be to deter men from offence, and to add strength to the law of GOD. But if the whole body of the reprobate are left to the influence of their fallen nature without remedy, they cannot be deterred from sin by threats of inevitable punishment; nor can they ever submit to the dominion of the law of GOD: their doom is fixed, and threats and examples can avail nothing.

We may leave every candid mind to the discussion of these and many other difficulties, suggested by the doctrine of the synod of Dort, as to the election of "a set and determinate number of men" to eternal life; and proceed to consider the second branch of this opinion—*that election is unconditional.* "It was made," says the synod, "not upon foresight of faith, and the obedience of faith, holiness, or any other good quality or disposition, (as a cause or condition before required in men to be chosen,) but *unto* faith, and the obedience of faith, holiness, &c."

Election, we have already said, must be either God's purpose in eternity to elect actually, or it must be actual election itself in time; for as election is choosing men "out of the world," into the true Church of Christ, *actual* election from eternity is not possible, because the subjects of election had no existence; there was no world to choose them "out of," and no Church into which to bring them. To affirm that any part

of mankind were chosen from eternity, in purpose, (for in no other way could they be chosen,) to become members of the Church without "foresight of faith, and the obedience of faith," is therefore to say, that God purposed from all eternity to establish a distinction between THE WORLD, "out" of which the elect are actually chosen, and the CHURCH, which has no foundation in, or respect to, faith and obedience; in other words, to constitute his Church of persons to whose faith and obedience he had no respect. For how is this conclusion to be avoided? The subjects of this election, it seems, are chosen *as men*, as Peter, James, and John, not as believers. God eternally purposed to make Peter, James, and John, members of his Church, without respect to their faith or obedience; his Church is therefore constituted on the sole principle of this purpose, not upon the basis of faith and obedience; and the persons chosen into it in time are chosen because they are of the number included in this eternal purpose, and with no regard to their being believers and obedient, or the contrary. How manifestly this opposes the word of God, we need scarcely stay to point out. It contradicts that specific distinction constantly made in Scripture between the true Church and the world, the only marks of distinction being, as to the former, faith and obedience; and as to the latter, unbelief and disobedience—in other words, the Church is composed not merely of men, as Peter, James, and John; but of Peter, James, and John believing and obeying: while all who believe not, and obey not, are "the world." The Scriptures make the essential elements of the Church to be believing and obeying men; the synod of Dort makes them to be men in the simple condition of being included in a set and determinate number, chosen with no respect to faith and obedience. Thus we have laid two very different foundations upon which to place the superstructure of the Church of Christ; one of them indeed is to be found in the Scriptures, but the other only in the theories of men; and as they agree not together, one of them must be renounced.

But election, without respect to faith, is contrary also to the history of the commencement and first constitution of the Church of Christ. Peter, James, and John did not become disciples of Christ in unbelief and disobedience. The very act of their becoming disciples of Christ unequivocally implied some degree both of faith and obedience. They were chosen, not as men, but as believing men. This is indicated also by the grand rite of baptism, instituted by Christ when he commissioned his disciples to preach the Gospel, and call men into his Church. That baptism was the gate into this Church cannot be denied; but faith was required in order to baptism; and, where true faith existed, this open confession of Christ would necessarily follow, without delay. Here, then, we see on what grounds men were actually elected into the Church of Christ; it was with respect to their faith that they were thus chosen

out of the world, and thus chosen into the Church. The rule, too, is universal; and if so, if it universally holds good that actual election has respect to faith, then, unless God's eternal *purpose* to elect be at variance with his electing, that is, unless he purposes one thing and does another differing from his purpose; purposes to elect without respect to faith; and only actually elects with respect to faith; his eternal purpose to elect had respect both to faith and obedience.

It is true, that the synod of Dort says, that election is "*unto* faith and the obedience of faith," &c, thereby making the end of election to be faith: in other words their doctrine is, that some men were personally chosen to believe and obey, even before they existed. But we have no such doctrine in Scripture as the election of individuals *unto* faith; and it is inconsistent with several passages which expressly speak of personal election

"Many are called but few chosen." In this passage we must understand, that the many who are *called*, are called to believe and obey the Gospel, or the calling means nothing; in other words they are not called. But if the end of this calling be faith and obedience, and the end of election also be faith and obedience, then have we in the text a senseless tautology; for if the many are called to believe and obey, then, of course, we need not have been told that the few are chosen to believe and obey, since the few are included in the many. But if the "choosing" of the "few" means, as it must, something different to the "calling" of the "many," then is the end of election different to the end of calling; and if the election be, as is plain from the passage, consequent upon the calling, then it can mean nothing else than the choosing of those "few," of the "many," who being obedient to the "calling," had previously believed and obeyed, into the true Church and family of God, which is the proper and direct object of personal election. This passage, therefore, which unquestionably speaks of personal election, contradicts the notion of an election *unto* faith and obedience, and makes our election *consequent* upon our obedience to the calling, or evangelical invitation.

Let this notion of personal election *unto* faith be tested also by another passage, in which, like the former, personal election is spoken of. "I have chosen you out of the world," John xv, 19. According to the notion of the synod of Dort, the act of election consists in appointing or ordaining a certain number of the human race to believe and obey: here the personal electing act is a choosing out of the world, a choosing, manifestly, into the number of Christ's disciples, which no man is capable of without a previous faith; for the very act of becoming Christ's disciple was a confession of faith in him.

A third passage, in which election is spoken of as personal, or at least with more direct reference to individual experience, than to Chris-

tians in their collective capacity as the Church of Christ, is 1 Peter i, 2, "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus!" Here obedience is not the end of election, but of the sanctification of the Spirit; and both are joined "with the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus," (which, in all cases, is apprehended by faith,) as the *media* through which our election is effected—"elect *through* sanctification of the Spirit," &c. These cannot, therefore, be the *ends* of our personal election; for if we are elected "*through*" that sanctification of the Spirit which produces obedience, we are not elected, being unsanctified and disobedient, in order to be sanctified by the Spirit that we may obey: it is the work of the Spirit which produces obedient faith, and through both we are "elected" into the Church of God.

Very similar to the passage just explained is 2 Thess. ii, 13, 14, "But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren, because God hath from the beginning chosen you unto salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth; whereunto he called you by our Gospel to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ." As the apostle had been predicting the future apostasy of persons professing Christianity, he recollects, with gratitude, that from "*the beginning*," from the very first reception of the Gospel in Thessalonica, which was preached there by St. Paul himself with great success, the Thessalonians had manifested no symptoms of this apostasy, but had been honourably steadfast in the faith. For this he gives thanks to God in the verses above quoted, and in the 15th exhorts them still "to stand fast." When, therefore, Calvinistic commentators interpret the clause "hath chosen you from the beginning," to mean election from eternity, they make a gratuitous assumption which has nothing in the scope of the passage to warrant it. Mr. Scott, indeed, (*Notes in loc.*) rather depends upon the "calling" of the Thessalonians being, as he states, *subsequent* to their election, than upon an arbitrary interpretation of the clause "from the *beginning*," and says, "if the *calling* of the Thessalonians was the effect of any preceding choice of them, it comes to the same thing whether the choice was made the preceding day, or from the foundation of the world." But the calling of the members of this Church is not represented by the apostle as the *effect* of their having been chosen, but on the contrary, their election is spoken of as the effect of "the sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth;" and these, as the effects of the calling of the Thessalonians by the Gospel,—"whereunto," to which sanctification and faith, "he called you by our Gospel." Or the whole may be considered as the antecedent to the next clause "to which" election from the beginning, through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth, "he called you by our Gospel." Certain it is, that sanctification and belief of the truth

cannot be the ends of election if they are the *means* of it, as they are here said to be; and we may therefore conclude from this, as well as from the other passages we have quoted as speaking of the personal election of believers, that this kind of election is not "*unto* faith and obedience," as stated in "The Judgment of the Synod of Dort," that is, a choice of individuals to be made believers and obedient persons; but an election, as it is expressed both by St. Peter and St. Paul, *through* faith and obedience; or, in other words, a choice of persons already believing and obedient into the family of God.

There are scarcely any other passages in the New Testament, which speak expressly of personal election; but there is another class of texts in which the term election occurs, which refer to believers, not distributively, but collectively; not personally, but as a body, either existing as particular Churches, or as the universal Church; and, by entirely overlooking, or ingeniously confounding this obvious distinction, the advocates of unconditional personal election bring forward such passages with confidence, as proofs of the doctrine of election *unto* faith furnished by the word of God. Thus the synod of Dort quotes, as the leading proof of its doctrine of personal election, Eph. i, 4, 5, 6, "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ, to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved." This, indeed, is the only passage quoted by the synod of Dort, in which the terms chosen and election occur; and, we may ask, why none of those on which we have above offered some remarks, were quoted also, since the subject of *personal* election is much more obviously contained in them than in that which they have adduced? The only answer is, that the others were perceived not to accord with the doctrine of "election *unto* faith and obedience;" while this, in which the personal election of individual believers is not referred to, but the collective election of the whole body of Christians, was better suited to give a colour to their doctrine, because it speaks, of course, and as the subject required, of election as the *means* of faith, and of faith as the *end* of election, an order which is reversed when the election of *individuals*, or the election of any body of believers, considered *distributively* and *personally*, is the subject of the apostle's discourse. If, indeed, the election spoken of in this passage were personal election, the Calvinistic doctrine would not follow from it; because it would admit of being questioned, whether the choosing in Christ before the foundation of the world, here mentioned, was a choice of certain persons, as *men* merely, or as *believing men*, which is surely the most rational. For all choice necessarily supposes some reason; but, as *men*, all things were equal between those

who, according to this scheme, were chosen, and those who were passed by. But, according to the Calvinists, this election was made *arbitrarily*, that is without any reason, but that God would have it so; and to this sense they bend the clause in the passage under consideration, "according to the *good pleasure* of his will." This phrase has, however, no such arbitrary sense. "The good pleasure of his will" means the benevolent and full acquiescence of the will of God with a wise and gracious act; and, accordingly, in verse 11, the phrase is varied "according to the COUNSEL of his own will," an expression which is at utter variance with the repulsive notion that mere will is in any case the rule of the Divine conduct, or, in other words, that he does any thing merely because he will do it, which excludes all "counsel." To choose men to salvation considered as believers, gives a reason for election which not only manifests the wisdom and goodness of God, but has the advantage of being entirely consistent with his own published and express decree: "he that believeth shall be saved: and he that believeth not shall be damned." This revealed and promulgated decree, we must believe, was according to his eternal purpose; and if from eternity he determined that believers, and only believers in Christ, among the fallen race, should be saved, the conclusion is inevitable that those whom he chose in Christ "before the foundation of the world," were considered, not as *men* merely, which gives no reason of choice worthy of any rational being, much less of the ever blessed God; but as believing men, which harmonizes the doctrine of election with the other doctrines of Scripture, instead of placing it, as in the Calvinistic scheme, in opposition to them. For the choice not being of certain men, as such; but of all persons believing; and all men to whom the Gospel is preached, being called to believe, every one may place himself in the number of the persons so elected. Thus we get rid of the doctrine of the election of a set and determinate number of men; and with that, of the fearful consequence, the absolute reprobation of all the rest, which so few Calvinists themselves have the courage to avow and maintain.

But though this argument might be very successfully urged against those who interpret the passage above quoted of personal election, the context bears unequivocal proofs that it is not of an election or predestination of this kind of which the apostle speaks; but of the election of believing Jews and Gentiles into the Church of God; in other words, of the eternal purpose of God, upon the publication of the Gospel, to constitute his visible Church no longer upon the ground of natural descent from Abraham, but upon the foundation of faith in Christ. For upon no other hypothesis can that distinction which the apostle makes between the Jews who first believed, and the Gentile Ephesians, who afterward believed, be at all explained. He speaks first of the election of Christians in general, whether Jews or Gentiles; using the pro-

nouns "us" and "we" as comprehending himself and all others. He then proceeds to the "predestination" of those "who *first* trusted in Christ:" plainly meaning himself and other believing Jews. He goes on to say, that the Ephesians were made partakers of the same faith, and therefore were the subjects of the same election and predestination: "in whom ye also trusted after that ye heard the word of truth:" the preaching of which truth to them as Gentiles, by the apostle and his coadjutors, was, in consequence of God "having made known unto them the mystery of his will, that in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might *gather together in one* all things in Christ;" which, in the next chapter, a manifest continuance of the same head of discourse, is explained to mean the calling in of the Gentiles with the believing Jews, reconciling "both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enemity thereby." The same subject he pursues in the third chapter, representing this union of believing Jews and Gentiles in one Church as the revelation of the mystery which had been hid "from the beginning of the world;" but was now manifested "according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord," verses 8–11. Here then we have the true meaning of the election and predestination of the Ephesians spoken of in the opening of the epistle: it was their election, as Gentiles, to be, along with the believing Jews, the Church of God, his acknowledged people on earth; which election was, according to God's "eternal purpose," to change the constitution of his Church; to establish it on the ground of faith in Christ; and thus to extend it into all nations. So far as this respected the Ephesians in general, their election to hear the Gospel sooner than many other Gentiles was unconditional and sovereign, and was an election "*unto* faith and obedience of faith;" that is to say, these were the *ends* of that election; but so far as the Ephesians were concerned, as individuals, they were actually chosen into the Church of Christ as its vital members, *on their believing;* and so the election to the saving benefits of the Gospel was *a consequence of their faith*, and not the end of it, and was therefore conditional—"in whom also ye trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the Gospel of your salvation; in whom also, *after that ye believed*, ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise."

The Calvinistic doctrine of election *unto* faith has no stronger passage than this to lean upon for support; and this manifestly fails them: while other passages in which the terms election, or chosen occur, all favour a very different view of the Scripture doctrine. When we are commanded to be diligent "to make our calling and *election* sure," or firm, this supposes that it may be rendered nugatory by want of diligence; a doctrine which cannot comport with the absolute certainty of our salvation as founded upon a decree determining, infallibly, our personal election to eternal life, and our faith and obedience in order to it. When

believers are called a "*chosen* generation," they are also called "a royal priesthood, a holy people;" and if the latter characteristics depend upon, and are consequences of *faith*, so the former depends upon a previous faith, and is the consequence of it. Finally, although these terms themselves occur in but few passages, and in all of them which respect the personal experience of individuals express, or necessarily imply, the previous condition of faith, there are many others, which, in different terms, embody the same doctrine. The phrases to be "IN Christ," and to be "CHRIST'S," are, doubtless, equivalent to the personal election of believers: and these, and similar modes of expression, are constantly occurring in the New Testament; but no man is ever represented as "Christ's," or as "in Christ," by an eternal election *unto* faith; but, on the contrary, as entering into that relation which is termed being "IN Christ;" or being "*Christ's*," through personal faith alone. The Scripture knows no such distinctions as *elect unbelievers*, and *elect believers*; but all unbelievers are represented as "of the world;" under "condemnation," so that "the wrath of God abideth upon them;" and as liable to eternal ruin. But if Calvinistic election be true, then there are elect unbelievers; and with respect to these, the doctrine of Scripture is contradicted: for they are not "of the world," though in a state of unbelief, since God from eternity "chose them out of the world;" they are not under condemnation, "but were justified from eternity;" "the wrath of God does not abide upon them," for they are objects of an unchangeable love which has decreed their salvation: subject to no conditions whatever; and therefore no state of unbelief can make them objects of wrath, as no condition of faith can make them objects of a love which was moved by no such consideration. Nor are they liable to ruin. They never were, nor can be liable to it: the very threats of God are without meaning as to them, and their consciousness of guilt and danger under the awakenings of the Spirit are deceptious, and unreal; contradicting the work of the Spirit in the heart of man, as THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH. For if he "convinces them of sin," he convinces them of danger; but they are, *in fact*, in no danger; and the monstrous conclusion follows inevitably, that the Spirit is employed in exciting fears which have no foundation.

We have thus considered the Scriptural doctrine of election; and as we find nothing in it which can warrant any one to limit the meaning of the texts we have adduced to prove that Christ made an actual atonement for the sins of all mankind, we may proceed to examine another class of Scripture proofs quoted by Calvinists to strengthen their argument:—those which speak of the "*calling*," and "*predestination*" of believers.

The terms "to call," "called," and "calling," very frequently occur in the New Testament, and especially in the epistles. Sometimes "to

call" signifies to invite to the blessings of the Gospel, to offer salvation through Christ, either by God himself, or under his appointment, by his servants; and in the parable of the marriage of the king's son, Matt. xxii, 1–14, which appears to have given rise to many instances of the use of this term in the epistles, we have three descriptions of "called" or invited persons. First, the disobedient who would not come in at the call; but made light of it. Second, the class of persons represented by the man who, when the king came in to see his guests, had not on the wedding garment; and with respect to whom our Lord makes the general remark, "for many are called, but few are chosen." The persons thus represented by this individual culprit, were not only "called," but actually came into the company. Third, the approved guests; those who were both called and chosen. As far as the simple calling, or invitation, is concerned, all these three classes stand upon equal ground; all were invited; and it depended upon their choice and conduct whether they embraced the invitation, and were admitted as guests. We have nothing here to countenance the Calvinistic fiction, which is termed "effectual calling." This implies an irresistible influence exerted upon all the approved guests, but withheld from the disobedient, who could not, therefore, be otherwise than disobedient; or at most could only come in without that wedding garment, which it was never put into their power to take out of the king's wardrobe; the want of which would necessarily exclude them, if not from the Church on earth, yet from the Church in heaven. The doctrine of the parable is in entire contradiction to this; for they who refused, and they who complied but partially with the calling, are represented, not merely as being left without the benefit of the feast; but as incurring additional guilt and condemnation for refusing the invitation. It is to this offer of salvation by the Gospel, this invitation to spiritual and eternal benefits, that St. Peter appears to refer, when he says, Acts ii, 39, "For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall CALL:" a passage which, we may observe, in passing, declares "the promise" to be as extensive as the "calling;" in other words, as the *offer* or invitation. To this also St. Paul refers, Rom. i, 5, 6, "By whom we have received grace and apostleship for obedience to the faith among all nations, for his name;" that is, to publish his Gospel, in order to bring all nations to the obedience of faith; "among whom are ye also the CALLED of Jesus Christ;" you at Rome have heard the Gospel, and have been invited to salvation in consequence of this design. This promulgation of the Gospel, by the ministry of the apostle, personally, under the name of *calling*, is also referred to in Galatians, i, 6, "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that *called you* into the grace of Christ," (obviously meaning that it was the apostle himself who had called them by his preaching

to the grace of Christ,) "unto another Gospel." So also in chapter v, 13, "For, brethren, ye have been *called* unto liberty." Again, 1 Thess. ii, 12, "That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath CALLED you [invited you] to his kingdom and glory."

In our Lord's parable it will also be observed, that the persons called are not invited as separate individuals to partake of solitary blessings; but they are called to "a feast," into a *company*, or *society*, before whom the *banquet* is spread. The full revelation of the transfer of the visible Church of Christ from Jews by birth, to believers of all nations, was not, however, then made. When this branch of the evangelic system was fully revealed to the apostles, and taught by them to others, that part of our Lord's parable which was not at first developed, was more particularly inculcated by his inspired followers. The calling of guests to the evangelical feast, we now more fully learn, was not the mere calling of men to partake of spiritual benefits; but calling them also to form a spiritual society composed of Jews and Gentiles, the believing men of all nations; to have a common fellowship in these blessings, and to be formed into this fellowship for the purpose of increasing their number, and diffusing the benefits of salvation among the people or nation to which they respectively belonged. The invitation, "the calling" of the first preachers, was to all who heard them in Rome, in Ephesus, in Corinth, in all other places; and those who embraced it, and joined themselves to the Church by faith, baptism, and continued public profession, were named especially and eminently "THE CALLED;" because of their obedience to the invitation. They not only put in their claim to the blessings of Christianity individually; but became members of the new Church, that spiritual society of believers which God now visibly owned as his people. As they were thus called into a common fellowship by the Gospel, this is sometimes termed their "vocation:" as the object of this Church state was to promote "holiness," it is termed a "holy vocation:" as sanctity was required of the members, they are said to have been "called to be saints:" as the final result was, through the mercy of God, to be eternal life, we hear of "the hope of their calling;" and of their being "called to his eternal glory by Christ Jesus."

These views will abundantly explain the various passages in which the term "calling" occurs in the epistles, Rom. ix, 24, "Even us whom he hath CALLED, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles;" that is, whom he hath made members of his Church through faith. 1 Cor. i, 24, "But unto them which are CALLED, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God;" the wisdom and efficacy of the Gospel being, of course, acknowledged in their very profession of Christ, in opposition to those to whom the preaching of "Christ crucified," was "a stumbling block," and "foolishness." 1 Cor. vii, 18,

"Is any man CALLED;" (brought to acknowledge Christ, and to become a member of his Church;) "being circumcised, let him not become uncircumcised: is any CALLED in uncircumcision, let him not be circumcised." Eph. iv, 1–4, "That ye walk worthy of the VOCATION wherewith ye are called. There is one *body*, and one spirit, even as ye are CALLED in one hope of your calling." 1 Thess. ii, 12, "That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath CALLED you to his kingdom and glory." 2 Thess. ii, 13, 14, "Through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth, whereunto he CALLED you by our Gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ." 2 Tim. i, 9, 10, "Who hath saved us and CALLED us with a holy calling; not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus, before the world began; but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ:" on which passage we may remark, that the object of the "calling," and the "purpose," mentioned in it, must of necessity be interpreted to mean the establishment of the Church on the principle of faith; and not, as formerly, on natural descent. For *personal election*, and a purpose of *effectual personal calling*, could not have been hidden till manifested by the appearing of Christ; since every instance of true conversion to God in any age prior to the appearing of Christ, would be as much a manifestation of eternal election, and an instance of personal effectual calling, according to the Calvinistic scheme, as it was after the appearance of Christ. The apostle is speaking of a purpose of God, which was kept *secret* till revealed by the Christian system; and, from various other parallel passages we learn that this secret, this "mystery," as he often calls it, was the union of the Jews and Gentiles in "one body," or Church, by faith.

In none of these passages is the doctrine of the exclusive calling of any set number of men contained; and the synod of Dort, as though they felt this, only attempt to *reason* the doctrine from a text not yet quoted; but which we will now examine. It is Rom viii, 30: "Whom he did predestinate, them he also *called;* and whom he *called*, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified." This is the text on which Calvinists chiefly rest their doctrine of effectual calling; and tracing it as they say, through its steps and links, they conclude, that a set and determinate number of persons having been predestinated unto salvation, this set number only are *called effectually*, then justified, and finally glorified. The words of the synod of Dort are, "He hath chosen a set number of certain men, neither better, nor more worthy than others; but lying in the common misery with others, to salvation in Christ, whom he had also appointed the Mediator and Head of the elect; and the foundation of salvation from all eternity; and so he decreed to give them to him to be saved; and effectually to

call, and draw them to a communion with him, by his word and Spirit; or to give them a true faith in him: to justify, sanctify, and finally glorify them; having been kept in the communion of his Son, to the demonstration of his mercy, and the praise of the riches of his glorious grace." (4)

The text under consideration is added by the synod, in proof of the doctrine of this article; but it was evidently nothing to the purpose, unless it had spoken of a set and determinate number of men as predestinated and called, independent of any consideration of their faith and obedience; which number, as being determinate, would, by consequence, exclude the rest. As these are points on which the text is at least silent, there is nothing in it unfriendly to those arguments founded on explicit texts of holy writ, which have been already urged against this view of election; and with this notion of election is refuted, also, the cognate doctrine of effectual calling, considered as a work of God in the heart, of which the elect only can be the subjects. But the passage, having been pressed into so alien a service, deserves consideration; and it will be found that it indeed speaks of the privileges and hopes of true believers; but not of those privileges and hopes as secured to them by any such decree of election as the synod has advocated. To prove this, we remark, 1. That the chapter in which the text is found, is the lofty and animating conclusion of St. Paul's argument on justification by faith: it is a discourse of that present state of pardon and sanctity, and of that future hope of felicity, into which justification introduces believers, notwithstanding those sufferings and persecutions of the present life to which those to whom he wrote were exposed, and under which they had need of encouragement. It was, obviously, not in his design here to speak of the doctrines of election and non-election, however these doctrines may be understood. There is nothing in the course of his argument which leads to them; and those who make use of the text in question for this purpose are obliged, therefore, to press it, by circuitous inference, into their service.

2. As the passage stands in intimate connection with an important and elucidatory context, it ought not to be considered as insulated and complete in itself; which has been the great source of erroneous interpretations. Under the sufferings of the present time, the apostle encourages those who had believed with the hope of a glorious resurrection: this forms the subject of his consolatory remarks from verse 17 to 25. The assistance and "intercession" of the Spirit; and the working of "all things together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his *purpose*;" clearly meaning those who, according to the Divine design, had received and embraced the

(4) Sententia de Divina Prædest. Art. 7. Est autem Electio immutabile Dei propositum, &c.

truth, form two additional topics of consolatory suggestion.—
age under consideration immediately follows, and is in full, for
has quoted it short: "And we know that all things work toge-
good to them that love God, to them who are the called (who
) according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he
predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he
the first born among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did
te, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also
and whom he justified, them he also glorified." The connec-
is manifest. "The sufferings of the present time could only
ther for the good" of them that "love God," by being con-
h, and compensated in a future state by a glorious resurrec-
the dead; and therefore the apostle shows that this was the
God, the ultimate and triumphant result of the administration
ne, that they who love God here, should be conformed to the
his Son, in his glorified state, that he might be "the first born
thren:" the head and chief of the redeemed, who shall be
ged as his "brethren," and co-heirs of his glory. Thus the
he 29th verse is a reason given to show WHY "all things, how-
ll in the present life, work together for good to them that love
d it is therefore introduced by the connective particle, ὅτι,
here, obviously, a casual signification, "*for* (*because*) whom
eknow, he also did predestinate."

apostle is here speaking, we grant, not of the foreknowledge
nation of bodies of men to Church privileges; but of the ex-
of believers, taken distributively and personally. This will,
be found to strengthen our argument against the use made of
part of the passage by the synod of Dort.

irmed of believers, that they were "*foreknown*." This term
ken in the sense of foreapproved. For not only is it common
acred writers to express approval by the phrase "*to know*;"
Hebraism the instances are many in the New Testament; but
i, 2, "to foreknow," is best interpreted into this meaning.—
th not cast away his people which he FOREKNEW." It is
whole people of Israel of which the apostle here speaks, as
xt shows; but of the believing part of them, called subse-
the remnant according to the election of grace:" a clause
been before explained. The question put by the apostle into
of an objecting Jew, is, "Hath God cast away his people?"
nied; but the illustration taken from the reservation of seven
men, in the time of Elijah, who had not bowed the knee to
ves that St. Paul meant to say, that God had cast off from
mbers of his Church, all but the remnant; all but his people
"*foreknew*;" those who had laid aside the inveterate preju-

dices of their nation, and had entered into the new Christian Church by faith. These he foreknew, that is approved; and so received them into his Church. In this sense of the term foreknew, the text in question harmonizes well with the context. "All things work together for good to them that love God," &c. "For, whom he did foreknow," (approve as lovers of him,) "he predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son," in mind and temper here, and especially in glory hereafter.

The second sense of foreknowing is that of simple prescience; and if any prefer this we shall not dispute with him, since it will come to the same issue. The foreknowledge of men must have respect either simply to their existence as persons, or as existing under some particular circumstances and characters. If persons only be the objects of this foreknowledge, then has God's prescience no more to do with the salvation of the elect than of the non-elect, since all are equally foreknown as *persons* in a state of existence: and we might as well argue the glorification of the reprobate from God's foreknowing them, in this sense, as that of the elect. The objects of this foreknowledge, then, must be men under certain circumstances and characters; not in their simple existence as rational beings. If, therefore, the term "foreknow," in the passage above cited, "God hath not cast away his people whom he *foreknew*," be taken in the sense of prescience, those of the general mass of Jews, who were not "cast away," were foreknown under some circumstance and character which distinguished them from the others; and what this was is made sufficiently plain from the context,—the persons foreknown were the then believing part of the Jews, "even so then, *at this present time also*, there is a remnant according to the election of grace." Equally clear are the circumstances and character under which, more generally, the apostle represents believers as having been foreknown in the text more immediately under examination. Those "whom he did foreknow," are manifestly the believers of whom he speaks in the discourse; and who are called in chap. viii, 28, "them that love God." Under some character he must have foreknown them, or his foreknowledge of them would not be special and distinctive; it would afford no ground from which to argue any thing respecting them: it could make no difference between them and others. This specific character is given by the apostle; but it is not that which is gratuitously assumed by the synod of Dort, a selection of them from the mass, without respect to their faith. It is their faith itself: for of believers only is St. Paul speaking as the subjects of this foreknowledge; and such believers too as "love God," and who, having actually embraced the heavenly invitation, are emphatically said to be, as before explained, "called according to his purpose."

To predestinate, or to determine beforehand, is the next term in the

text; but here it is also to be remarked, that the persons predestinated, or before determined to be glorified with Christ, are the same persons, under the same circumstances and character, as those who are said to have been foreknown of GOD; and what has been said under the former term, applies, therefore, in part, to this. The subjects of predestination are the persons foreknown, and the persons foreknown are true believers: foreknown as such, or they could not have been specially or distinctively foreknown, according to the doctrine of the apostle. This predestination, then, is not of persons "UNTO faith and obedience," but of believing and obedient persons UNTO eternal glory. Nor are faith and obedience mentioned any where as the *end* of predestination, except in Ephesians chap. i, where we have already proved, when treating of election, that the predestination spoken of in that chapter, is the eternal purpose of God to choose the Gentile Ephesians into his Church, along with the believing Jews: and that what is there said is not intended of personal, but of collective election and predestination; and that to the means and ordinances of salvation. For the argument, by which this is established, let the reader to prevent repetition, turn back.

The passage before us, then, declares, that true believers were foreknown and predestinated to eternal glory; and when the apostle adds, "moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified;" he shows in particular how the Divine purpose to glorify believers is carried into effect, through all its stages. The great instrument of bringing men to "love God" is the Gospel; they are therefore CALLED, invited by it, to this state and benefit: the calling being obeyed, they are JUSTIFIED; and being justified, and continuing in that state of grace, they are GLORIFIED. This is the plain and obvious course of the amplification pursued by the apostle; but let us remark how many unscriptural notions the synod of Dort engrafts upon it. First, a "certain number" of persons, not as *believers*, but as *men*, are foreknown; then a decree of predestination to eternal life goes forth in their favour; but still without respect to them as believing men as the subjects of that decree;—then we suppose, by another decree, (for the first cannot look at qualities at all,) and by a second predestination, they are to be made believers;—then they are exclusively "called:" then infallibly justified; and being justified, are infallibly glorified. In opposition to these notions, we have already shown, that the persons spoken of are foreknown and predestinated as believers, not as men or persons; and we may also oppose Scriptural objections to every other part of the interpretation.

As to *calling*, we allow that all of whom the apostle speaks are necessarily "called;" for since he is discoursing of the predestination of *believers* in Christ to eternal glory, and does not touch the question of

the salvation, or otherwise, of those who have not the means of becoming such, the calling of the Gospel is necessarily supposed, as it is only upon that Divine system being proposed to their faith, that they could become *believers* in Christ. But though all such as the apostle speaks of are "called;" they are not the only persons called: on the contrary, our Lord declares, that "*many* are called, but *few* chosen." To confine the calling here spoken of to those who are actually saved, it was necessary to invent the fiction of "effectual calling," which is made peculiar to the elect; but calling is the invitation, and offer, and publication of the Gospel: a bringing men into a state of Christian privilege to be improved unto salvation, and not an operation in them. Effectual invitation, effectual offer, and effectual publication, are turns of the phrase which sufficiently expose the delusiveness of their comment. By effectual calling, they mean an inward compelling of the mind to embrace the outward invitation of the Gospel, and to yield to the inward solicitations of the Spirit which accompanies it; but this, whether true or false, is a totally different thing from all that the New Testament terms "calling." It is true, that some embrace the call, and others reject it, yet is there in the "calling" of the Scripture nothing exclusively appropriate to those who are finally saved; and though the apostle supposes those whom he speaks of in the text as "called," to have been obedient, he confines not the calling itself to them so as to exclude others,—still "MANY are called." Nor is the synod more sound in assuming that all who are called are "justified."* If "many are called, and few chosen," this assumption is unfounded: nay, all compliances with the call do not issue in justification; for the man who not only heard the call, but came in to the feast, put not on the wedding garment, and was therefore finally cast out. Equally contradictory to the Scripture is it so to explain St. Paul here, as to make him say, that all who are justified, are also glorified. The justified are glorified: but not, as we have seen from various texts of Scripture already, *all* who are justified. For if we have established it, that the persons who "*turn back* to perdition;" "make shipwreck of *faith*, and of a *good conscience*;" who turn out of the "way of *righteousness*;" who forget that they were "*purged* from their old sins;" who have "*tasted* the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come; and were made *partakers* of the Holy Ghost," and were "*sanctified*" with the blood they afterward "counted an unholy thing;" are represented by the apostles to have been in a state of grace and acceptance with God, through Christ; then all persons justified are not infallibly glorified; but only such are saved as "endure to the end;" and they only receive that "crown of life" who are "faithful unto death."

The clear reason why the apostle, having stated that true believers were foreknown and predestinated, introduces also the *order* and *method* of their salvation, was, to connect that salvation with the Gospel, and

the work of Christ; and to secure to him the glory of it. The Gospel reveals it, that those who "love God" shall find that "all things work together for their good," *because* (ὅτι) they are "predestinated to be conformed to the image of the Son of God," in his glory; yet the Gospel did not find them *lovers of God*, but made them so. Since, therefore, none but such persons were so foreknown and predestinated to be heirs of glory, the Gospel calling was issued according to "his purpose," or plan of bringing them that love him to glory, in order to produce this love in them. "*Whom*" he thus called, assuming them to be obedient to the call, he justified; "and whom he justified," assuming them to be faithful unto death, he "glorified." But since the persons predestinated were contemplated as believers, not as a certain number of *persons*; then all to whom the invitation was issued might obey that call, and all might be justified, and all glorified. In other words, all who heard the Gospel might, through it, be brought to love God; and might take their places among those who were "predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son." For since the predestination, as we have seen, was not of a certain number of *persons*, but of all *believers* who love God; then, either it must be allowed that all who were called by the Gospel, might take the character and circumstances which would bring them under the predestination mentioned by the apostle; or else those who deny this are bound to the conclusion, that God calls (invites) many whom he never intends to admit to the celestial feast; and not only so, but punishes them, with the severity of a relentless displeasure, for not obeying an invitation which he never designed them to accept, and which they never had the power to accept. In other words, the interpretation of this passage by the synod of Dort obliges all who follow it to admit all the consequences connected with the doctrine of reprobation, as before stated.

CHAPTER XXVII.

An Examination of certain Passages of Scripture, supposed to Limit the Extent of Christ's Redemption.

Having now shown that those passages of Holy Writ, in which the terms election, calling, predestination, and foreknowledge occur, do not warrant those inferences, by which Calvinists attempt to restrain the signification of those declarations with respect to the extent of the benefit of Christ's death which are expressed in terms so universal in the New Testament, we may conclude our investigation of the sense of Scripture on this point by adverting to some of those insinuated texts which are most frequently adduced to support the same conclusion.

John vi, 37, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."

It is inferred from this, and some similar passages in the Gospels, that by a transaction between the Father and the Son, a certain number of persons, called "the elect," were given to Christ, and in process of time "drawn" to him by the Father; and that as none can be saved but those thus "given" to him, and "drawn" by the Father, the doctrine of "distinguishing grace" is established; and the rest of mankind, not having been given by the Father to the Son, can have no saving participation in the benefits of a redemption, which did not extend to them. This fiction has often been defended with much ingenuity; but it remains a fiction still unsupported by any good interpretation of the texts which have been assumed as its foundation.

1. The first objection to the view usually taken by Calvinists of this text, is, that in the case of the perverse Jews, with whom the discourse of Christ was held, it places the reason of their not "coming" to Christ, in their not having been "given" to him by the Father; whereas our Lord, on the contrary, places it in themselves, and shows that he considered their case to be in their own hands by his inviting them to come to him, and reproving them because they would not come. "Ye have not his word (the word of the Father) abiding in you; for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not," John v, 38. "And ye will not come to me that ye may have life," verse 40. "How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another," verse 44. "For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me, for he wrote of me," verse 46. Now these statements cannot stand together; for if the true reason why the perverse Jews did not believe in our Lord was, that they had not been given to him of the Father, then it lay not *in themselves;* but if the reason was that "his word did not abide in them;" that they "*would* not come to him;" that they sought worldly "honour;" finally, that they believed not Moses's writings; then it is altogether contradictory to these declarations, to place it in an *act of God;* to which it is not attributed in any part of the discourse.

2. To be "*given*" by the Father to Christ, is a phrase abundantly explained in the context which this class of interpreters generally overlook.

It had a special application to those pious Jews, who "waited for redemption at Jerusalem:" those who read and *believed* the writings of Moses, (a general term it would seem for the Old Testament Scriptures,) and who were thus prepared, by more spiritual views than the rest, though they were not unmixed with obscurity, to receive Christ as the Messiah. Of this description were Peter, Andrew, Philip, Nathanael, Lazarus and his sisters, and many others. Philip says to Nathanael, "We have found him of whom *Moses in the law and the prophets* did

write;" and Nathanael was manifestly a pious Jew; for our Lord said of him, "Behold an *Israelite indeed*, in whom is no *guile*." The light which such honest inquirers into the meaning of the Scriptures obtained as to the import of their testimony concerning the Messiah, and the character and claims of Jesus, is expressly attributed to the teaching and revelation of "the Father." So, after Peter's confession, our Lord exclaimed, "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar Jonah, for *flesh and blood* hath not revealed it unto thee; but *my Father* which is in heaven." This teaching, and its influence upon the mind is, in John vi, 44, called the "*drawing*" of the Father, "No man can come to me, except the Father *draw* him;" for, that "*to draw*," and "*to teach*," mean the same thing, is evident, since our Lord immediately adds, "It is written in the prophets, and they shall be all *taught of God*;" and then subjoins this exegetical observation:—"Every man, therefore, that hath *heard*, and hath *learned* of *the Father*, cometh to me." Those who truly "*believed*" Moses's words, then, were under the Father's illuminating influence, "*heard* and *learned* of the Father;" were "*drawn*" of the Father; and so, by the Father, were "given to Christ," as his disciples, to be more fully taught the mysteries of his religion, and to be made the saving partakers of its benefits:—for "this is the Father's will which sent me, that of all which he hath given me (thus to perfect in knowledge, and to exalt in holiness,) I should lose nothing; but should raise it up again at the last day." Thus we have exhibited that beautiful process in the work of God in the hearts of sincere Jews, which took place in their transit from one dispensation to another, from Moses to Christ. Taught of the Father; led into the sincere belief, and general spiritual understanding of the Scriptures as to the Messiah; when Christ appeared, they were "drawn" and "given" to him, as the now visible and accredited Head, Teacher, Lord, and Saviour of the Church. All in this view is natural, explicit, and supported by the context; all in the Calvinistic interpretation appears forced, obscure, and inapplicable to the whole tenor of the discourse. For to what end of edification of any kind, were the Jews told that none but a certain number, elected from eternity, and given to him before the world was by the Father, should come to him; and that they to whom he was then speaking were not of that number? But the coherence of the discourse is manifest, when, in these sermons of our Lord, they were told that their not coming to Christ was the proof of their unbelief in Moses's writings; that they were not "taught of God;" that they had neither "heard nor learned of the Father," whom they yet professed to worship, and seek; and that, as the hinderance to their coming to Christ was in the state of their hearts, it was remediable by a diligent and honest search of the Scriptures; and by listening to the teachings of God. To this very class of Jews our Lord, in this same discourse, says, "Search the Scriptures;" but to

what end were they to do this, if, in the Calvinistic sense, they were not given to him of the Father? The text in question, then, thus opened by a reference to the whole discourse, is of obvious meaning. "All that the Father giveth me after this preparing teaching, shall or will come to me; (for it is simply the future tense of the indicative mood which is used; and no notion of irresistible influence is conveyed;) and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out." The latter clause is added to show the perfect harmony of design between Christ and the Father, a point often adverted to in this discourse; for "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me." Whom, therefore, the Father so gives, I receive: I enter upon my assigned office, and shall be faithful to it. In reference also to the work of God in the hearts of men in general, as well as to the honest and inquiring Jews of our Lord's day, these passages have a clear and interesting application. The work of the Father is carried on by his convincing and teaching Spirit; but that Spirit "testifies" of Christ, "leads" to Christ, and "*gives*" to Christ, that we may receive the full benefit of his sacrifice and salvation, and be placed in the Church of which he is the Head. But in this there is no exclusion. That which hinders others from coming to Christ, is that which hinders them from being "drawn" of the Father; from "hearing and learning" of the Father, in his holy word, and by his Spirit; which hinderance is the moral state of the heart, not any exclusive decree; not the want of teaching, or drawing; but, as it is compendiously expressed in Scripture, a "resistance of the Holy Ghost."

Matt. xx, 15, 16, "Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with my own? Is thine eye evil because I am good? So the last shall be first, and the first last; for many are called but few chosen."

This passage has been often urged in proof of the doctrine of unconditional election; and the argument raised upon it is, that God has a right to dispense grace and glory to whom he will, on a principle of pure sovereignty; and to leave others to perish in their sins. That the passage has no relation to this doctrine, needs no other proof than that it is the conclusion of the parable of the labourers in the vineyard. The householder gives to them that "wrought but one hour" an equal reward to that bestowed upon those who had laboured through the twelve. The latter received the full price of the day's labour agreed upon; and the former were made subjects of a special and sovereign dispensation of grace. The exercise of the Divine sovereignty, in bestowing *degrees* of grace, or reward, is the subject of the parable, and no one disputes it; but, according to the Calvinistic interpretation, no grace at all, no reward, is bestowed upon the non-elect, who are, moreover, punished for rejecting a grace never offered. The absurdity of such a use of the parable is obvious. It relates to no such subject; for its *moral* mani-

lastly relates to the reception of great offenders, and especially of the Gentiles, into the favour of Christ, and the abundant rewards of heaven.

2 Timothy ii, 19, "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his; and, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity."

The apostle, in this chapter, is speaking of those ancient heretics who affirmed "that the resurrection is passed already, and overthrew the faith of some." What then? The truth itself is not overthrown; the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, or inscription, "The Lord knoweth," or approveth, or, if it please better, distinguishes and acknowledges, "them that are his;" and, "Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity;" which is as much as to say that none are truly "the Lord's" who do not depart from iniquity; and that those whose faith is "overthrown" by the influence of corrupt principles and manners, are no longer accounted "his:" all which is perfectly congruous with the opinions of those who hold the unrestricted extent of the death of Christ. Toward the Calvinistic doctrine, this text certainly bears no friendly aspect; for surely it was of little consequence to any, to have their "faith overthrown," if that faith never was, nor could be, connected with salvation.

John x, 26, "But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you."

The argument here is, that the cause of the unbelief of the persons addressed was, that they were not of the number given to Christ by the Father, from eternity, to the exclusion of all others. (5) Let it, however, be observed, that in direct opposition to this, men are called the sheep of Christ by our Lord himself, not with reference to any supposed transaction between the Father and the Son in eternity, which is never even hinted at, but because of their *qualities* and *acts*. "My sheep *hear* my voice, and I know them; and they follow me." "A stranger will they not *follow*." Why then did not the Jews believe? Because they had not the qualities of Christ's sheep: they were neither discriminating as to the voice of the shepherd, nor obedient to it. The usual Calvinistic interpretation brings in our Lord, in this instance, as teaching the Jews that the reason why they did not believe on him, was, that they *could* not believe! for, as Mr. Scott says in the note below, "not being of that chosen remnant, they were left to the pride and enmity of their carnal hearts." This was not likely to be very edifying to them. But the words of our Lord are manifestly words of reproof, grounded not upon acts of God, but upon acts of their own; and they are parallel to

(5) "The true reason why they did not believe was, the want of that simple, teachable, and inoffensive temper, which characterized his sheep, FOR not being of that CHOSEN remnant, they were left to the pride and enmity of their carnal hearts." (SCOTT'S *Com.*)

the passages—"If God were your Father, ye would love me," chap. viii, 42. "Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice," xviii, 37. "How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another," v, 44.

John xiii, 18, "I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen: but that the Scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me."

"He perfectly knew," says Mr. Scott on the passage, "what persons he had chosen, as well as which of them were chosen unto salvation." This is surely making our Lord utter a very unmeaning truism; for as he chose the apostles, so he must have "*known*" that he chose them. Dr. Whitby's interpretation is, therefore, to be taken in preference. "I know the temper and disposition of those whom I have chosen, and what I may expect from every one of them; for which cause I said, 'Ye are not all clean;' but God in his wisdom hath permitted this, that as Ahithophel betrayed David, though he was his familiar friend, so Judas, my familiar at my table, might betray the Son of God; and so the words recorded, Psalm xli, 9, might be fulfilled in him also of whom King David was the type." (*Notes in loc.*) Certainly Judas was "chosen," as well as the rest. "Have not I *chosen* you *twelve*, and one of you is a devil?" nor have we any reason to conclude that Christ uses the term chosen differently in the two passages. When, therefore, our Lord says, "I know whom I have chosen," the term *know* must be taken in the sense of discriminating character.

John xv, 16, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you that ye should go and bring forth fruit." Mr. Scott, whom, as being a modern Calvinistic commentator, we rather choose again to quote, interprets—"chosen them unto salvation." In its proper sense, we make no objection to this phrase: it is a Scriptural one; but it must be taken in its own connection. Here, however, either the term "chosen" is to be understood with reference to the apostolic *office*, which is very agreeable to the context; or if it relate to the salvation of the disciples, it can have no respect to the doctrine of *eternal* election. For if the election spoken of were not an act done *in time*, it would have been unnecessary for our Lord, to say, "Ye have not *chosen me*;" because it is obvious they could not choose him before they came into being. Another passage also, in the same discourse, farther proves, that the election mentioned was an act done in time. "I have *chosen you out of the world*," verse 19. But if they were "chosen out of the world," they were chosen subsequently to their being "in the world;" and, therefore, the election spoken of is not eternal. The last observation will also deprive these interpreters of another favourite passage, "Those that thou *gavest* me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition." The "giving" here mentioned, was no more an act of God in eternity as they pretend, than the "choosing" to which we have already referred.

for in the same discourse the apostles are called "the men thou *gavest me out of the world*," and were therefore given to Christ *in time*. The exception as to Judas, also, proves that this "*giving*" expresses actual discipleship. Judas had been "*given*" as well as the rest, or he could not have been mentioned as an exception; that is, he had been once "*found*," or he could not have been "*lost*." 2 Tim. i, 9, "Who hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."

Mr. Scott here contends for the doctrine of the *personal election* of the persons spoken of, "from the beginning, or before eternal ages," which is the most literal translation; and argues that this cannot be denied, without supposing "that all who live and die impenitent, may be said to be saved, and called with a holy calling; because a Saviour was promised from the beginning of the world." "Indeed," he adds, "the purpose of God is mentioned as the *reason* why they, rather than others, were saved and called." We shall see the passage in a very different light, if we attend to the following considerations.

"The purpose and grace," or gracious purpose, "which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began," is represented as having been "*hid* in past ages;" for the apostle immediately adds, "but is *now* made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ." It cannot be the personal election of believers, therefore, of which the apostle here speaks; because it was saying nothing to declare that the Divine purpose to elect them was not manifest in former ages; but was reserved to the appearing of Christ. Whatever degree of manifestation God's purpose of personal election as to individuals receives, even the Calvinists acknowledge that it is made obvious only by the personal moral changes which take place in them through their "effectual calling," faith, and regeneration. Till the individual, therefore, comes into being, God's purpose to elect him cannot be manifested; and those who were so elected, but did not live till Christ appeared, could not have their election manifested before he appeared. Again, if personal election be intended in the text, and calling and conversion are the proofs of personal election, then it is not true that the election of individuals to eternal life, was kept hid until the appearing of Christ; for every true conversion, in any former age, was as much a manifestation of personal election, that is of the peculiar favour and "distinguishing grace" of God, as it is under the Gospel. A parallel passage in the Epistle to the Ephesians, chap. iii, 4–6, will, however, explain that before us. "Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ, which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is *now* revealed unto the holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; that *the Gentiles should be fellow heirs*, and of the same

body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the Gospel:" and in verse 11 this is called, in exact conformity to the phrase used in the Epistle to Timothy, "*the eternal purpose* which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." The "purpose," or "gracious purpose," mentioned in both places, as formerly hidden, but "*now* manifested," was therefore the purpose to form one universal Church of believing Jews and Gentiles; and in the text before us, the apostle, speaking in the name of all his fellow Christians, whether Jews or Gentiles, says that they were saved and called according to that previous purpose and plan—"who hath saved us and called *us*," &c. The reason why the Apostle Paul so often refers to "this eternal purpose" of God, is to justify and confirm his own ministry as a teacher of the Gentiles, and an assertor of their equal, spiritual rights with the Jews; and that this subject was present to his mind when he wrote this passage, and not an eternal, personal election, is manifest from verse 11, which is a part of the same paragraph, "whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and *a teacher of the Gentiles*."

But, says Mr. Scott, "all who live and die impenitent, may then be said to be 'saved, and called with a holy calling,' because a Saviour was promised from the beginning of the world." But we do not say that any are saved only because a Saviour was promised from the beginning of the world; but that the apostle simply affirms that the salvation of believers, whether Gentiles or Jews, and the means of that salvation, were the consequences of God's previous purpose, before the world began. All who are actually saved, may say, "We are saved," according to this purpose; but if their actual salvation shut out the salvation of all others, then no more have been saved than those included by the apostle in the pronoun "*us*," which would prove too much. But Mr. Scott tells us that "'the purpose of God' is mentioned as the *reason* why they, rather than others, were thus saved and called." It is mentioned with no such view. The purpose of God is introduced by the apostle as his authority for making to "the Gentiles" the offer of salvation; and as a motive to induce Timothy to prosecute the same glorious work, after his decease. This is obviously the scope of the whole chapter.

Acts xiii, 48, "And as many as were *ordained* to eternal life believed." Mr. Scott is somewhat less confident than some others as to the support which the Calvinistic system is thought to derive from the word rendered *ordained*. He, however, attempts to leave the impression upon the minds of his readers, that it means, "*appointed* to eternal life."

We may, however, observe,—

1. That the persons here spoken of were the Gentiles to whom the apostles preached the Gospel, upon the Jews of the same place "putting it from them," and "judging" or proving "themselves unworthy of eternal life." But if the only reason why the Gentiles believed was, that they

were "ordained," in the sense of personal predestination, "to eternal life;" then the reason why the Jews believed not was the want of such a predestinating act of God, and not as it is affirmed, an act of their own —the PUTTING IT AWAY from them.

2. This interpretation supposes that all the *elect* Gentiles at Antioch believed at that time; and that no more, at least of full age, remained to believe. This is rather difficult to admit; and therefore Mr. Scott says, "though it is probable that all who were thus affected at first, did not at that time believe unto salvation; yet many did." But this is not according to the text, which says expressly, "*as many* as were ordained to eternal life believed:" so that such commentators must take this inconvenient circumstance along with their interpretation, that all the elect at Antioch were, at that moment, brought into Christ's Church.

3. Even some Calvinists, not thinking that it is the practice of the apostles and evangelists to lift up the veil of the decrees so high as this interpretation supposes, choose to render the words—"as many as were *determined*," or "*ordered*" for eternal life.

4. But we may finally observe, that, in no place in the New Testament, in which the same word occurs, is it ever employed to convey the meaning of destiny, or predestination: a consideration which is fatal to the argument which has been drawn from it. The following are the only instances of its occurrence: Matt. xxviii, 16, "Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had *appointed* them." Here the word means *commanded*, or at most *agreed upon* beforehand, and certainly conveys no idea of destiny. Luke vii, 8, "For I also am a man *set* under authority." Here the word means "placed, or disposed." Acts xv, 2, "They *determined* that Paul and Barnabas should go up to Jerusalem." Here it signifies mutual agreement and decision. Acts xxii, 10, "Arise, and go into Damascus; and there it shall be told thee of all things which are *appointed* for thee to do." Here it means committed to, or appointed in the way of injunction; but no idea of *destiny* is conveyed. Acts xxviii, 23, "And when they had *appointed* him a day," when they had fixed úpon a day by mutual agreement; for St. Paul was not under the command or control of the visiters who came to him to hear his doctrine. Rom. xiii, 1, "The powers that be are *ordained* of God:" clearly signifying constituted and ordered. 1 Cor. xvi, 15, "They have *addicted* themselves to the ministry of the saints:" here it can mean nothing else than applied, devoted themselves to. Thus the word never takes the sense of predestination; but, on the contrary, when St. Luke wishes to convey that notion, he combines it with a preposition, and uses a compound verb—"and hath determined the times *before appointed*." This was *pre-ordination*, and he therefore so terms it; but in the text in question he speaks not of pre-ordination, but of *ordination* simply. The word employed signifies, "to place, order, appoint, dispose, determine"

and is very variously applied. The prevalent idea is that of settling, ordering, and resolving; and the meaning of the text is, that as many as were fixed and resolved upon eternal life, as many as were careful about and determined on salvation, believed. For that the historian is speaking of the candid and serious part of the hearers of the apostles, in opposition to the blaspheming Jews; that is, of those Gentiles "who, when they heard this were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord," is evident from the context. The persons who then believed, appear to have been under a previous preparation for receiving the Gospel; and were probably religious proselytes associating with the Jews.

Luke x. 20. "But rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven." The inference from this text is, that there is a register of all the elect in the "Book of Life," and that their number, according to the doctrine of the synod of Dort, is fixed and determinate. Our Calvinistic friends forget, however, that names may be "blotted out of the Book of Life:" and so the theory falls.—"And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall *take away* his part out of the Book of Life."

Prov. xvi. 4. "The Lord hath made all things for himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." If there be any relevance in this passage to the Calvinistic theory, it must be taken in the supralapsarian sense, that the final cause of the creation of the wicked is their eternal punishment. It follows from this, that sin is not the cause of punishment, but that this flows from the mere will of God; which is a sufficient reason. The persons spoken of are "wicked." Either they were made wicked by themselves, or by God. If not by God, then to make the wicked for the day of evil, can only mean that he renders them who have made themselves wicked, and remain incorrigibly so, the instruments of glorifying his justice, "in the day of evil," that is, in the day of punishment. The Hebrew phrase, rendered literally, is, "the Lord doth work all things for himself:" which applies as well to acts of government as to acts of creation. Thus, then, we are taught by the passage, not that God *created* the wicked to punish them, but so governs, controls, and subjects all things to himself; and so orders them for the accomplishment of his purpose, that the wicked shall not escape his just displeasure; since upon such men the day of evil will ultimately come. It is therefore added in the next verse, "Though hand join in hand, he shall not be unpunished." (6)

John x. 37, 40. "But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him: that the saying of Esaias the pro-

(6) Hengstenberg translates the verse, "Jehovah hath made all things for himself: yea, even the wicked for daily sustains:" and observes, "should the received translation be correct, 'the day of evil' would be considered by a Jew as the day of Solomon, to mean, the day of trouble and affliction."

phet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed? Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again, He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them."

Mr. Scott's interpretation is, in its first aspect, more moderate than that of many divines of the same school. It is—"they had long shut their own eyes, and hardened their own hearts; and so God would give up many of them to such *judicial* blindness, as rendered their conversion and salvation impossible. The prophecy was not the *motive* or *cause* of their wickedness; but it was the declaration of God's *purpose*, which could not be defeated: therefore while this prophecy stood in Scripture against them, and others of like character, who hated the truth from the love of sin, the event became certain; in which sense it is said, that they *could not* believe."

That, in some special and aggravated cases, and especially in that which consisted in ascribing the miracles of Christ to Satan, and thus blaspheming the Holy Ghost; (cases, however, which probably affected but a few individuals, and those principally the chief Pharisees and rabbins of our Lord's time;) there was such a judicial dereliction as Mr. Scott speaks of, is allowed; but that it extended to the body of the Jews, who at that time did not believe in the mission and miracles of Christ, may be denied. The contrary must appear from the earnest manner in which their salvation was sought by Christ and his apostles, subsequently to this declaration; and also from the *fact* of great numbers of this same people being afterward brought to acknowledge and embrace Christ and his religion. This is our objection to the former part of this interpretation. Not every one who is lost finally, is given up previously to judicial blindness. To be thus abandoned *before death* is a special procedure, which our Lord himself confines to the special case of blasphemy against the Holy Ghost. To the latter part of the comment, the objection is still stronger. Mr. Scott acknowledges the wicked and wilful blindness of these Jews to be the *cause* of the judicial dereliction supposed. From this it would naturally follow, that this wilful blinding and hardening of their hearts, was the true reason why they "*could not* believe," as provoking God to take away his Holy Spirit from them. But Mr. Scott cannot stop here. He will have another cause for their incapacity to believe: not, indeed, the prophecy quoted from Isaiah by the evangelist; but "God's purpose," of which that prediction, he says, was the "declaration." It follows, then, that "they could not believe," because it was "God's *purpose which could not be defeated.*" Agreeably to this Mr. Scott understands the pre-

diction as asserting, that the agent in blinding the eyes of the people reproved, that is, the obstinate Jews, was God himself.

Let us now, therefore, more particularly examine this passage, and we shall find,

1. That it affirms, not that their eyes should be blinded, or their ears closed, by a Divine agency, as assumed by Mr. Scott and other Calvinists. This notion is not found in Isaiah vi, from which the quotation is made. There the agent is represented to be the prophet himself. "Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes," &c. Now as the prophet could exert no secret direct influence over the minds of the disobedient Jews, he must have fulfilled this commission, if it be taken literally, by preaching to them a fallacious and obdurating doctrine, like that of the false prophets; but if, as we know, he preached no such doctrine, then are the words to be understood according to the genius of the Hebrew language, which often represents him as an agent, who is the occasion, however innocent and undesigned, of any thing being done by another. Thus the prophet, in consequence of the unbelief of the Jews of his day in those promises of Messiah he was appointed to deliver, and which led him to complain, "Who hath believed our report?" became an occasion to the Jews of "making their own hearts fat, and their ears heavy, and of shutting their eyes" against his testimony. The true agents were, however, the Jews themselves; and by all who knew the genius of the Hebrew language they would be understood as so charged by the prophet. Thus the Septuagint, the Arabic, and the Syriac versions all agree in rendering the text, so that the people themselves, to whom the prophet wrote, are made the agents of doing that which, in the style of the Hebrews, is ascribed to the prophet himself. So also, it is manifest, that St. Paul, who quotes the same scripture, Acts xxviii, 25–27, understood the prophet; "Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers, saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive: for the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and *their eyes* HAVE THEY *closed*: lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them." Nor in the passage as it is given by St. John, is the blinding of the eyes of the Jews attributed to God. It stands, it is true, in our version, "*He* hath blinded their eyes," &c. But the Greek verbs have no nominative case expressed, and it is left to be supplied by the reader. Nor does the context mention the agent; and farther, if we supply the pronoun *he*, we cannot refer it to God, since the passage closes with a change of person, "and *I* should heal them." The agent blinding and hardening, and the agent attempting to "heal," can,

not, therefore, be the same, because they are opposed to each other, not only grammatically, but in design and operation. That agent, then, may be "the god of this world," to whom the work of blinding them that believe not, is expressly attributed by the Apostle Paul; or St. John, familiar with the Hebrew style, might refer it to the prophet, who, consequentially, and through the wilful perverseness of the Jews, was the occasion of their making their own "hearts gross, and closing their ears;" or, finally, the personal verb may be used impersonally, and the active form for the passive, of which critics furnish parallel instances. (7) But in all these views the true responsible agent and criminal doer is "THIS PEOPLE,"—this perverse and obstinate people themselves; a point to which every part of their Scriptures gives abundant testimony.

2. It may be denied that the prophecy of Isaiah here quoted is, as Mr. Scott represents it, "a declaration of God's *purpose*, which could not be defeated." A simple prophecy is not a declaration of purpose at all; but the declaration of a future event. If a purpose of GOD, to be hereafter accomplished, be declared, this declaration becomes more than a simple prophecy: it connects the act with an agent; and in the case before us, that agent is assumed to be GOD. But we have shown, that the agent in blinding the eyes, and closing the ears of these perverse Jews, is nowhere said to be GOD; and therefore the prophecy is not a declaration of HIS purpose. Again, if it were a declaration of God's purpose, it would not follow that it could not be defeated: for prophetic threatenings are not absolute; but imply conditions. This is so far from being a mere assumption, that it is established by the authority of Almighty GOD himself, who declares, Jer. xviii, 7, 8, "At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it; if that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them." Here we have a prophetic commination *uttered*; "at what instant I *speak*" —"that nation against whom I have *pronounced*." We have also the *purpose* in the mind of GOD—"the evil that I *thought*;" and yet this prediction might fail, and this purpose be defeated. So in the case of repentant Nineveh, the predicted destruction failed, and the wrathful purpose was defeated, without any impeachment of the Divine attributes: on the contrary, they were illustrated by this manifestation of the mingled justice and grace of his administration. Mr. Scott, like many others, argues as though the prediction of an event gave certainty to it. But the certainty or uncertainty of events is not created by prophecy. Prophecy results from prescience; and prescience has respect to what will be, but not necessarily to what *must* be. Of this, however, more in its proper place.

(7) See Whitby's Paraphrase and Annot. and his Discourse on the Five Points, chap. i.

3. If this prophecy could be made to bear all that the Calvinists impose upon it, it would not serve their purpose. It would, even then, afford no proof of *general* election and reprobation, since it has an exclusive application to the unbelieving part of the Jewish people only; and is never adduced, either by St. John or by St. Paul, as the ground of any general doctrine whatever.

Jude 4, "For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men," &c.

The word which is here rendered ordained, is literally *forewritten*; and the word rendered condemnation, signifies legal *punishment*, or *judgment*. The passage means, therefore, either that the class of men spoken of had been *foretold* in the Scriptures, or that their punishment had been there formerly typified, in those examples of ancient times, of which several are cited in the following verses; as Cain, Balaam, Korah, and the cities of the plain. Mr. Scott, therefore, very well interprets the text, when he says, "the Lord had foreseen them, for they were *of old, registered* to this condemnation: many *predictions* had, from the beginning, been delivered to this effect." But when he adds, "Nay, these predictions had been *extracts*, as it were, from the registers of Heaven, even the *secret* and *eternal* decrees of God, in which he had determined to leave them to their pride and lusts, till they merited and received this condemnation," we may well ask for the proof. All this is manifestly gratuitous; brought to the text, and not deduced from it; and is, therefore, very unworthy of a commentator. The "extracts" from the register of God's decrees, as they are found in the Scriptures, contain no such sentiment as that these abusers of the grace of God only did that which they could not but do, in consequence of having been "left to their pride and lusts," and excluded before they were born from the mercies of Christ. If this sentiment then is not in the "extracts," it is not in the original register; or else something is there which God, in his own revealed word, has not extracted, and respecting which the commentator must either have had some independent revelation, or have been guilty of speaking very rashly. On the contrary, in the parallel passage in 2 Peter ii, 1–3, where the same class of persons is certainly spoken of, so far are they from being represented as excluded from the benefits of Christ's redemption, that they are charged with a specific crime, which necessarily implies their participation in it, with the crime of "denying the Lord that BOUGHT them."

1 Cor. iv, 7, "For who maketh thee to differ from another?"

The context shows that the apostle was here endeavouring to repress that ostentation which had arisen among many persons in the Church of Corinth, on account of their spiritual gifts and endowments. This he does by referring those gifts to God, as the sole giver,—"for who maketh thee to *differ?*" or who confers *superiority* upon thee? as the

sense obviously is; "and what hast thou that thou didst not receive?" Mr. Scott acknowledges that "the apostle is here speaking more immediately of natural abilities, and spiritual gifts; and not of special and efficacious grace." If so, then the passage has nothing to do with this controversy. The argument he however affirms, concludes equally in one case, as in the other; and in his sermon on election he thus applies it: "Let the blessings of the Gospel be fairly proposed, with solemn warnings and pressing invitations, to two men of exactly the same character and disposition: if they are left to themselves in entirely similar circumstances, the effect must be precisely the same. But, behold, while one proudly scorns and resents the gracious offer, the other trembles, weeps, prays, repents, believes! Who maketh this man to differ from the other? or what hath he that he hath not received? The Scriptural answer to this question, when properly understood, decides the whole controversy." (8)

As this is a favourite argument, and a popular dilemma in the hands of the Calvinists, and so much is supposed to depend upon its solution, we may somewhat particularly examine it.

Instead of supposing the case of two men "of exactly the same character and disposition," why not suppose the same man in two moral states? for one man who "proudly scorns the Gospel" does not more differ from another who penitently receives it, than the same man who has once scoffingly rejected, and afterward meekly submitted to it, differs from himself; as for instance, Saul the Pharisee from Paul the apostle. Now, to account for the case of two men, one receiving the Gospel, and the other rejecting it, the theory of election is brought in; but in the case of the one man in two different states, this theory cannot be resorted to. The man was elect from eternity; he is no outcast from the mercy of his God, and the redemption of his Saviour, and yet, in one period of his life, he proudly scorns the offered mercy of Christ, at another he accepts it. It is clear, then, that the doctrine of election, simply considered in itself, will not solve the latter case; and by consequence it will not solve the former: for the mere fact, that one man rejects the Gospel while another receives it, is no more a proof of the non-election of the non-recipient, than the fact of a man now rejecting it, who shall afterward receive it, is a proof of his non-election. The solution, then, must be sought for in some communication of the grace of God, in some inward operation upon the heart, which is supposed to be a consequence of election; but this leads to another and distinct question. This question is not, however, the vincibility or invincibility of the grace of God, at least not in the first instance. It is, in truth, whether there is any operation of the grace of God in man at all tending to salvation, in cases where we see the Gospel rejected. Is the man

(8) Calvin puts the matter in much the same way. Inst. lib. iii, c. 24.

who rejects perseveringly, and he who rejects but for a time, perhaps a long period of his life, left without any good motions or assisting influence from the grace of God, or not? This question seems to admit of but one of three answers. Either he has no gracious assistance at all, to dispose him to receive the Gospel; or he has a sufficient influence of grace so to dispose him; or that gracious influence is dispensed in an insufficient measure. If the first answer be given, then not only are the non-elect left without any visitations of grace throughout life; but the elect also are left without them, until the moment of their effectual calling. If the second be offered as the answer, then both in the case of the non-elect man who finally rejects Christ, and that of the elect man, who rejects him for a great part of his life, the *saving* grace of God must be allowed so to work as to be capable of counteraction, and effectual resistance. If this be denied, then the third answer must be adopted, and the grace of God must be allowed so to influence as to be designedly insufficient for the ends for which it is given; that is, it is given for no saving end at all, either as to the non-elect, or as to the elect all the time they remain in a state of actual alienation from Christ. For if an insufficient degree of grace is bestowed, when a sufficient degree might have been imparted, then there must have been a reason for restraining the degree of grace to an insufficient measure; which reason could only be, that it might be insufficient, and therefore not saving. Now, two of the three of these positions are manifestly contrary to the word of God. To say that no gracious influence of the Holy Spirit operates upon the unconverted, is to take away their guilt; since they cannot be guilty of rejecting the Gospel if they have no power to embrace it, either from themselves, or by impartation, while yet the Scripture represents this as the highest guilt of men. All the exhortations, and reproofs, and invitations of Scripture, are, also, by this doctrine, turned into mockery and delusion; and, finally, there can be no such thing in this case, as "resisting the Holy Ghost;" as "grieving and quenching the Spirit;" as "doing despite to the Spirit of grace," either in the case of the non-elect, who are never converted, or of the elect, before conversion: so that the latter have never been guilty of stubbornness, and obstinacy, and rebellion, and resistance of grace; though these are, by them, afterward, always acknowledged among their sins. Nor did they ever feel any good motion, or drawing from the Spirit of God, before what they term their effectual calling; though, it is presumed, that few, if any of them, will deny this in fact.

If the doctrine, that no grace is imparted before conversion, is then contradicted both by Scripture and experience, how will the case stand, as to the intentional restriction of that grace to a degree which is insufficient to dispose the subject to the acceptance of the Gospel? If this view be held, it must be maintained equally as to the elect before their

conversion, and as to the non-elect. In that case, then, we have equal difficulty in accounting for the guilt of man, as when it is supposed that no grace at all is imparted; and for the reproofs, calls, and invitations, and threatenings of the word of God. For where lies the difference between the absolute non-impartation of grace, and grace so imparted as to be designedly insufficient for salvation? Plainly there is none, except that we can see no end at all for giving insufficient grace; a circumstance which would only serve to render still more perplexing the principles and practice of the Divine administration. It has no end of mercy, and none of justice; nor, as far as can be perceived, of wisdom. Not of *mercy*, for it effects nothing merciful, and designs not to effect it; not of *justice*, for it places no man under equitable responsibility; not of *wisdom*, for it has no assignable *end*. The Scripture treats all men to whom the Gospel is preached as endowed with power, not indeed from themselves, but from the grace of God, to "turn at his reproof;" to come at his "call;" to embrace his "grace;" but they have no capacity for any of these acts, if either of these opinions be true: and thus the word of God is contradicted. So also is experience, in both cases; for there could be no sense of guilt for having rejected Christ, and grieved the Holy Spirit, either in the non-elect never converted, or in the elect before conversion, if either they had no visitations of grace at all; or if these were designedly granted in an insufficient degree.

It follows, then, that the doctrine of the impartation of grace to the unconverted, in a sufficient degree to enable them to embrace the Gospel, must be admitted; and with this doctrine comes in that of a power in man to use, or to spurn this heavenly gift and gracious assistance: in other words, a power of willing to come to Christ, even when men do not come; a power of considering their ways, and turning to the Lord, when they do not consider them, and turn to him; a power of praying, when they do not pray; and a power of believing, when they do not believe: powers all of grace; all the results of the work of the Spirit in the heart; but powers to be exerted by man, since it is man, and not God, who wills, and turns, and prays, and believes, while the influence under which this is done is from the grace of God alone. This is the doctrine which is clearly contained in the words of St. Paul, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do, of his own good pleasure;" where, not only the operation of God, but the co-operation of man, are distinctly marked; and are both held up as necessary to the production of the grand result—"salvation."

It will appear, then, from these observations, that the question, "Who maketh thee to differ?" as urged by Mr. Scott and others from the time of Calvin, is a very inapposite one to their purpose, for,

First, it is a question which the apostle asks with no reference to the difference in religious state, but only with respect to gifts and endowments. Secondly, the Holy Ghost gives no authority for such an application of his words, as is thus made, in any other part of Scripture. Thirdly, it cannot be employed for the purpose for which it is drawn forth so often from its context and meaning; for, in the use thus made of it, it is falsely assumed, that the two men instanced, the one who rejects, and the other who embraces the Gospel, are not each endowed with sufficient grace to enable them to receive God's gracious offer. Now this, we may again say, must either be denied or affirmed. If it be affirmed, then the difference between the two men consists, not where they place it, in the destitution or deficiency on the one hand, or in the plenitude on the other, of the grace of God; but in the *use* of grace: and when they say, "it is God which maketh them to differ," they say in fact, that it is God that not only gives sufficient grace to each; but *uses* that grace for them. For if it be allowed that sufficient grace for repentance and faith is given to each, then the true difference between them is, that one repents, and the other does not repent; the one believes, and the other does not believe: if, therefore, this difference is to be attributed to God directly, then the *act* of repenting, and the *act* of believing, are both the acts of God. If they hesitate to avow this, for it is an absurdity, then either they must give up the question as totally useless to them, or else take the other side of the alternative, that to all who reject the Gospel, sufficient grace to receive it is not given. How then will that serve them? They may say, it is true, when they take the man who embraces the Gospel, "Who maketh him to differ but God, who gives this sufficient grace to him?" but then we have as equal right to take the man who rejects the Gospel, and ask, "Who maketh him to differ" from the man that embraces it? To this they cannot reply that he maketh *himself* to differ; for that which they here lay down is, that he has either no grace at all imparted to him to enable him to act as the other; or, what amounts to the same thing, no sufficient degree of it to produce a true faith; that he never had that grace; that he is, and always must remain, as destitute of it as when he was born. He does not, therefore, *make himself* to differ from the man who embraces the Gospel; for he has no power to imitate his example, and to make himself equal with him; and the only answer to our question is, "that it is God who maketh him to differ from the other," by withholding that grace by which alone he could be prevented from rejecting the Gospel; and this, so far from "settling the whole controversy," is the very point in debate.

This dilemma, then, will prove, when examined, but inconvenient to themselves; for if sufficiency of grace be allowed to the unconverted, then the Calvinists make the *acts* of grace, as well as the gift of grace itself

to be the work of God in the elect: if sufficiency of grace is denied, then the unbelief and condemnation of the wicked are not from themselves, but from God. (9) The fact is, that this supposed puzzle has been always used *ad captandum;* and is unworthy so grave a controversy; and as to the pretence, that the admission of a power in man to use or to abuse the grace of God involves some merit or ground of glorying in man himself, this is equally fallacious. The power "to will and to do," is the sole result of the working of God in man. All is of grace: "By the grace of God," must every one say, "I am what I am." Here is no dispute; every good thought, desire, and tendency of the heart, and all its power to turn these to practical account by prayer, by faith, by the use of the means of grace, through which new power "to will and to do," new power to use grace, as well as new grace, is communicated, is of God. Every good act, therefore, is the use of a communicated power which is given of grace, as the stretching out of the withered hand of the healed man was the use of the power communicated to his imbecility, and still *working with the act,* though not the act itself; and to attempt to lay a ground of boasting and self sufficiency in the *assisted* acceptance of the grace of God by us; and the *empowered* submission of our hearts to it, is as manifestly absurd as it would be to say, that the man, whose arm was withered, had great reason to congratulate himself on his share in the glory of the miracle, because he himself stretched out the invigorated member at the command of Christ; and because it was not, in fact, lifted up by the hand of him who, in that act of faith and obedience, had healed him.

The question of the invincibility of Divine grace, is a point to be in another place considered.

Acts xviii, 9, 10, "Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace, for I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee; for *I have much people in this city*"

Mr. Scott, to whom the doctrine of election is always present, says, "In this Christ *evidently* spake of those who were *his* by election, the gift of the Father, and his own purchase; though, at that time, in an unconverted state." (*Notes in loc.*) It would have been more "evident" had this been *said* by the writer of the Acts as well as by Mr. Scott, or any thing approaching to it. The "evidence," we fear, was all in Mr. Scott's predisposition of mind; for it nowhere else appears. The expression is, at least, capable of two very satisfactory interpretations, independent of the theory of Calvinistic election. It may mean, that there were many well disposed and serious inquirers among the "Greeks" in

(9) This Calvin scruples not to say, "The supreme Lord, therefore, by *depriving* of the communication of his light, and leaving in darkness those whom he has reprobated, makes way for the accomplishment of his own predestination." (*Inst.* lib. iii, c. 24.

Corinth; for when Paul turned from the Jews, he "entered into the house of Justus, one *that worshipped* God." This man was a Greek proselyte; and, from various parts of the Acts of the Apostles it is plain, that this class of people were not only numerous, but generally received the Gospel with joy, and were among the first who joined the primitive Churches. They manifested their readiness to receive the Gospel in Corinth itself when the Jews "opposed and blasphemed;" and it is not improbable, that to such proselytes, who were in many places "a people prepared of the Lord," reference is made, when our Saviour, speaking to Paul in this vision, says, "I have much people in this city." Suppose, however, he speaks prospectively and prophetically, making his foreknowledge of an event the means of encouraging the labours of his devoted apostle, the doctrine of election follows neither from the fact of the foreknowledge of God, nor from prophetic declarations grounded upon it. Even Calvin founds not election upon God's foreknowledge; but upon his decree.

A few other passages might be added, which are sometimes adduced as proofs of the Calvinistic theory of "election" and "distinguishing grace;" but they are all either explained by that view of Scriptural election which has been at large adduced, or are of very obvious interpretation. I believe that I have omitted none, on which any great stress is laid in the controversy; and the reader will judge how far those which have been examined serve to support those *inferences* which tend to limit the universal import of those declarations which prove, in the literal sense of the terms, that our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, "by the grace of God, tasted death for every man."

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Theories which limit the Extent of the Death of Christ.

We have, in the foregoing attempt to establish the doctrine of the redemption of all mankind against our Calvinistic brethren, taken their scheme in the sense in which it is usually understood, without noticing those minuter shades with which the system has been varied. In this discussion, it is hoped, that no expression has hitherto escaped inconsistent with candour. Doctrinal truth would be as little served by this as Christian charity; nor ought it ever to be forgotten by the theological inquirer, that the system which we have brought under review has, in some of its branches, always embodied, and often preserved in various parts of Christendom, that truth which is vital to the Church, and salutary to the souls of men. It has numbered, too, among its votaries, many venerable names; and many devoted and holy men, whose writings often rank among the brightest lights of Scriptural criticism and

practical divinity. We think the *peculiarities* of their creed clearly opposed to the sense of Scripture, and fairly chargeable *in argument* with all those consequences we have deduced from them; and which, were it necessary to the discussion, might be characterized in still stronger language. Those consequences, however, let it be observed, we only exhibit as *logical* ones. By many of this class of divines they are denied; by others modified; and by a third party explained away to their own satisfaction by means of metaphysical and subtle distinctions. As logical consequences only they are, therefore, in such cases, fairly to be charged upon our opponents, in any disputes which may arise. By keeping this distinction in view, the discussion of these points may be preserved unfettered; and candour and charity sustain no wound.

We shall now proceed to justify the general view we have taken of the Calvinistic doctrine of election, predestination, and partial redemption, by adducing the sentiments of Calvin himself, and of Calvinistic theologians and Churches; after which our attention may be directed, briefly, to some of those more modern modifications of the system, which, though they differ not, as we think, so materially, from the original model as some of their advocates suppose, yet make concessions not unimportant to the more liberal, and, as we believe, the only Scriptural theory.

Calvin has at large opened his sentiments on election, in the third book of his Institutes. (The following quotations are made from Allen's translation. London, 1823.) "Predestination we call the eternal decree of God; by which he hath determined in himself what he would have to become of every individual of mankind. For they are not all created with similar destiny; but eternal life is foreordained for some, and eternal damnation for others. Every man, therefore, being *created for one or other of these ends*, we say, he is predestinated, either to life, or to death." After having spoken of the election of the race of Abraham, and then of particular branches of that race, he proceeds, "Though it is sufficiently clear that God, in his secret counsel, freely chooses whom he will, and rejects others, his gratuitous election is but half displayed till we come to particular individuals, to whom God not only offers salvation, but *assigns* it in such a manner, that the certainty of the effect is liable to no suspense or doubt." He sums up the chapter, in which he thus generally states the doctrine, in these words: (chap. 21, book iii:) "In conformity, therefore, to the clear doctrine of the Scripture, we assert, that by an eternal and immutable counsel, God hath once for all determined both whom he would admit to salvation, and whom he would condemn to destruction. We affirm that this counsel, as far as concerns the elect, is founded on his gratuitous mercy, totally irrespective of human merit; but that to those whom he devotes to condemnation, the

gate of life is closed by a just and irreprehensible, but *incomprehensible* judgment. In the elect, we consider calling as an evidence of election; and justification as another token of its manifestation, till they arrive in glory, which constitutes its completion. As God seals his elect by vocation and justification, so by *excluding* the reprobate from the knowledge of his name, and sanctification of his Spirit, he affords an other indication of the judgment that awaits them."

In the commencement of the following chapter (book iii, chap. 22,) he thus rejects the notion that predestination is to be understood as resulting from God's foreknowledge of what would be the conduct of either the elect or the reprobate. "It is a notion commonly entertained, that God, foreseeing what would be the respective merits of every individual, makes a correspondent distinction between different persons; that he adopts as his children such as he foreknows will be deserving of his grace; and devotes to the damnation of death others, whose dispositions he sees will be inclined to wickedness and impiety. Thus they not only obscure election by covering it with the veil of foreknowledge, but pretend that it originates in another cause." Consistently with this, he a little farther on asserts, that election does not flow from holiness; but holiness from election. "For when it is said, that the faithful are elected that they should be holy, it is fully implied, that the holiness they were in future to possess, had its origin in election." He proceeds to quote the example of Jacob and Esau, as loved and hated before they had done good or evil, to show that the only reason of election and reprobation is to be placed in God's "secret counsel." He will not allow the future wickedness of the reprobate to have been considered in the decree of their rejection, any more than the righteousness of the elect as influencing their better fate. "God hath mercy on whom he will have mercy; and whom he will he hardeneth. You see how he (the apostle) attributes *both* to the *mere will* of God. If, therefore, we can assign no reason why he grants mercy to his people, but because such is his pleasure, neither shall we find any other cause but *his will* for the reprobation of others. For when God is said to harden, or show mercy to whom he pleases, men are taught by this declaration, to seek *no cause beside his will.*" (Book iii, chap. 22.)—"Many, indeed, as if they wished to avert odium from God, admit election in such a way as to deny that any one is reprobated. But this is puerile and absurd; because election itself could not exist without being opposed to reprobation:—whom God *passes by, he therefore reprobates;* and *from no other cause* than his determination to exclude them from the inheritance which he predestines for his children." (Book iii, chap. 23.)

This is the scheme of predestination as exhibited by Calvin; and it is remarkable, that the answers which he is compelled to give to objec

tions did not unfold to this great and acute man its utter contrariety to the testimony of God, and to all established notions of equity among men. To the objection taken from justice, he replies, "They (the objectors) inquire by what right the Lord is angry with his creatures who had not provoked him by any previous offence; for that to devote to destruction whom he pleases, is more like the caprice of a tyrant, than the lawful sentence of a judge. If such thoughts ever enter into the minds of pious men, they will be sufficiently enabled to break their violence by this one consideration, how exceedingly presumptuous it is, only to inquire into the causes of the Divine *will;* which is, in fact, and is justly entitled to be, the *cause* of every thing that exists. For if it has any cause, then there must be something antecedent on which it depends, which it is impious to suppose. For the will of God is the highest rule of justice; so that what he wills must be considered just, for this very reason, because he wills it." The evasions are here curious. 1. He assumes the very thing in dispute, that God has willed the destruction of any part of the human race, "for no other cause than because he *wills it;*" of which assumption there is not only not a word of proof in Scripture; but, on the contrary, all Scripture ascribes the death of him that dieth to his own will, and not to the will of God; and therefore contradicts his statement. 2. He pretends that to assign any cause to the Divine will is to suppose something antecedent to, something above God, and, therefore, "impious;" as if we might not suppose something IN God to be the rule of his will, not only without any impiety, but with truth and piety; as, for instance, his perfect wisdom, holiness, justice, and goodness: or, in other words, to believe the exercise of his will to flow from the perfection of his whole nature; a much more honourable and Scriptural view of the will of God than that which subjects it to no rule, even in the nature of God himself. 3. When he calls the will of God, "the highest rule of justice," beyond which we cannot push our inquiries, he confounds the will of God, as a rule of justice *to us*, and as a rule to himself. This will is our rule; yet even then, because we know that it is the will of a perfect being; but when Calvin represents *mere will* as constituting God's own rule of justice, he shuts out knowledge, discrimination of the nature of things, and holiness; which is saying something very different to that great truth, that God cannot will any thing but what is perfectly just. It is to say that blind will, will which has no respect to any thing but itself, is God's highest rule of justice; a position which, if presented abstractedly, many of the most ultra Calvinists would spurn. 4. He determines the question by the authority of his own metaphysics, and totally forgets that one *dictum* of inspiration overturns his whole theory,—God "*willeth* all men to be saved:" a declaration, which, in no part of the sacred volume, is opposed or limited by any contrary declaration.

Calvin is not, however, content thus to leave the matter; but resorts to an argument in which he has been generally followed by those who have adopted his system with some mitigations. "As we are all corrupted by sin, we must necessarily be odious to God, and that not from tyrannical cruelty; but in the most *equitable estimation* of justice. If all whom the Lord predestinates to death are, in their natural condition, liable to the sentence of death, what injustice do they complain of receiving from him?" To this Calvin very fairly states the obvious rejoinder made in his day; and which the common sense of mankind will always make,—"They object, were they not by the decree of God antecedently predestinated to that corruption which is now stated as the *cause* of their condemnation? When they perish in their corruption, therefore, they only suffer the punishment of that misery into which, in consequence of his predestination, Adam fell, and precipitated his posterity with him." The manner in which Calvin attempts to refute this objection, shows how truly unanswerable it is upon his system. "I confess," says he, "indeed, that all the descendants of Adam fell, *by the Divine will*, into that miserable condition in which they are now involved; and this is what I asserted from the beginning, that we must always return at last *to the sovereign determination of God's will*; the cause of which is hidden in himself. But it follows not, therefore, that God is liable to this reproach; for we will answer them in the language of Paul, 'O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?'"—That is, in order to escape the pinch of the objection, he assumes, that St. Paul affirms that God has "formed" a part of the human race for eternal misery; and that by imposing silence upon them, he intended to declare that this proceeding in God was just. Now the passage may be proved from the context to mean no such thing; but, if that failed, and it were more obscure in its meaning than it really is, such an interpretation would be contradicted by many other plain texts of Holy Writ, of which Calvin takes no notice. Even if this text would serve the purpose better, it gives no answer to the objection; for we are brought round again, as indeed Calvin confesses, to his former, and indeed only argument, that the whole matter, as he states it, is to be referred back to the Divine will; which will, though perfectly arbitrary, is, as he contends, the highest rule of justice. "I say, with Augustine, that the Lord created those whom he certainly foreknew would fall into destruction; and that this was actually so, because *he willed* it; but of his will, it belongs not to us to demand the reason, which we are incapable of comprehending; nor is it reasonable that the Divine will should be made the subject of controversy with us, which is only another name for the highest rule of justice." Thus he shuts us out from pursuing the argument. When God places fences against our approach, we

grant, that we are bound not "to break through and gaze;" but not so, when man, without authority, usurps this authority, and warns us off from his own inclosures, as though we were trespassing upon the peculiar domains of God himself. Calvin's evasion proves the objection unanswerable. For if all is to be resolved into the mere will of God as to the destruction of the reprobate; if they were created for this purpose, as Calvin expressly affirms; if they fell into their corruption in pursuance of God's determination; if, as he had said before, "God passes them by, and reprobates them, *from no other* cause than his determination to exclude them from the inheritance of his children," why refer to their natural corruption at all, and their being odious to God in that state, since the same reason is given for their corruption as for their reprobation?—Not any fault of theirs; but the mere will of God, "the reprobation hidden in his secret counsel," and not grounded on the visible and tangible fact of their demerit. Thus the election taught by Calvin is not a choice of some persons to peculiar grace from the whole mass, equally deserving of punishment; (though this is a sophism;) for, in that case, the decree of reprobation would rest upon God's foreknowledge of those passed by as corrupt and guilty, which notion he rejects. "For since God foresees future events only in consequence of *his decree that they shall happen*, it is useless to contend about foreknowledge, while it is evident that all things come to pass rather *by ordination and decree*. It is a HORRIBLE DECREE, I confess; but no one can deny that God foreknew the future fate of man before he created him; and that he did foreknow it, because it was *appointed* by his own decree." Agreeably to this, he repudiates the distinction between will and permission. "For what reason shall we assign for his permitting it, but because it is his will? It is *not probable*, however, that man procured his own destruction by the mere *permission*, and without any *appointment* of God."

With this doctrine he again makes a singular attempt to reconcile the demerit of men:—"Their perdition depends on the Divine predestination in such a manner, that the *cause* and *matter* of it are found *in themselves*. For the first man fell because the Lord had determined it should so happen. The reason of this determination is unknown to us. Man, therefore, falls according to the *appointment* of Divine providence; but he falls by *his own fault*. The Lord had a little before pronounced every thing that he had made to be 'very good.' Whence, then, comes the depravity of man to revolt from his GOD? Lest it should be thought to come from creation, God approved and commended what had proceeded from himself. By his own wickedness, therefore, man corrupted the nature he had received pure from the Lord, and by his fall he drew all his posterity with him to destruction." It is in this way that Calvin attempts to avoid the charge of making God the author of sin. But

how God should not merely *permit* the defection of the first man, but *appoint* it, and *will* it, and that his will should be the "necessity of things," all which he had before asserted, and yet that Deity should not be the author of that which he *appointed*, *willed*, and *imposed a necessity upon*, would be rather a delicate inquiry. It is enough that Calvin rejects the impious doctrine, and even though his principles directly lead to it, since he has put in his disclaimer, he is entitled to be exempted from the charge;—but the logical conclusion is inevitable.

In much the same manner he contends that the necessity of sinning is laid upon the reprobate by the ordination of God, and yet denies God to be the author of their sin, since the corruption of men was derived from Adam, by his own fault, and not from God. Here, also, although the difficulty still remains of conceiving how a *necessity* of sinning should be laid on the descendants of Adam, and that without any counteraction of grace in the case of the reprobate, and that this should be attributable to the will of God as its *cause*, while yet God, in no sense injurious to his perfections, is to be regarded as the author of sin, we still admit Calvin's disclaimer; but then he cannot have the advantage on both sides, and must renounce this or some of his former positions. He exhorts us "rather to contemplate the evident cause of condemnation, which is nearer to us, in the corrupt nature of mankind, than search after a hidden, and altogether incomprehensible one, in the predestination of God." "For, though, by the eternal providence of God, man was *created* to that misery to which he is subject, yet the *ground* of it he has derived from himself, not God; since he is thus ruined, solely in consequence of his having degenerated from the pure creation of God to vicious and impure depravity." Thus, almost in the same breath, he affirms that men became reprobate from no other cause than "the will of God," and his "sovereign determination;"—that men have no reason "to expostulate with God, if they are predestinated to eternal death, without *any demerit* of their own, merely by his sovereign will;"—and then, that the corrupt nature of mankind is the *evident* and *nearer* cause of condemnation; (which cause, however, was still a matter of "appointment," and "ordination," not "permission;") and that man is "ruined solely in consequence of his having degenerated from the pure state in which God created him." Now these propositions manifestly fight with each other; for if the reason of reprobation be laid in man's corruption, it cannot be laid in the mere will and sovereign determination of God, unless we suppose him to be the author of sin. It is this offensive doctrine only which can reconcile them. For if God so wills, and appoints, and necessitates the depravity of man, as to be the author of it, then there is no inconsistency in saying that the ruin of the reprobate is both from the mere will of God, and from the corruption of their nature, which is but the result of that will. The one is then, as Calvin

statu, the "evident and nearer cause," the other the more remote and hidden one; yet they have the same source, and are substantially acts of the same will. But if it be denied that God is, in any sense, the author of evil, and if sin is from man alone, then is the "corruption of nature" the effect of an independent will; and if this be the "real source," as he says, of men's condemnation, then the decree of reprobation rests not upon the sovereign will of God, as its sole cause, which he affirms; but upon a cause dependent on the will of the first man. But as this is denied, then the other must follow. Calvin himself indeed contends for the perfect concurrence of these proximate and remote causes, although, in point of fact, to have been perfectly consistent with himself, he ought rather to have called the *mere will of* GOD THE CAUSE of the decree of reprobation, and the corruption of man THE MEANS by which it is carried into effect: language which he sanctions, and which many of his followers have not scrupled to adopt.

So fearfully does this opinion involve in it the consequences that in sin man is the instrument, and God the actor, that it cannot be maintained, as stated by Calvin, without this conclusion. For as two causes of reprobation are expressly laid down, they must be either opposed to each other, or be consenting. If they are opposed, the scheme is given up; if consenting, then are both reprobation and human corruption the results of the same will, the same decree and necessity. It would be trifling to say that the decree does not influence; for if so, it is no decree in Calvin's sense, who understands the decree of GOD, as the foregoing extracts and the whole third book of his Institutes plainly show, as *appointing* what shall be, and by that appointment making it *necessary*. Otherwise he could not reject the distinction between will and permission, and avow the sentiment of St. Augustine, "that the will of God is the necessity of things; and that what he has willed will necessarily come to pass." (Book iii, chap. 23, sec. 8.) So, in writing to Castalio, he makes the sin of Adam the result of an act of God. "You say Adam fell by his free will. I except against it. That he might not fall, he stood in need of that strength and constancy with which God armeth all the elect, as long as he will keep them blameless. Whom God has elected, he props up with an invincible power unto perseverance. Why did he not afford this to Adam, if he would have had him stand in his integrity?" (1) And with this view of necessity, as resulting from the decree of God, the immediate followers of Calvin coincide; the end and the means, as to the elect, and as to the reprobate, are equally fixed by the decree; and are both to be traced to the *appointing* and *ordaining* will of God. On such a scheme it is therefore worse than trifling to attempt to make out a case of justice in favour of this assumed Divine procedure, by alleging the corruption and guilt of man: a point which,

(1) Quoted in Bishop Womack's Calvinist Cabinet Unlocked, p. 34.

indeed, Calvin himself, in fact, gives up when he says, "that the reprobate obey not the word of God, when made known to them, is justly imputed to the wickedness and depravity of their hearts, *provided it be at the same time stated*, that they are abandoned to this depravity, because they have been raised up by a just, but *inscrutable* judgment of God, to display his glory in their condemnation." (*Inst.* book iii, chap. 24, sec. 14.)

It is by availing themselves of these ineffectual struggles of Calvin to give some colour of justice to his reprobating decree, by fixing upon the corruption of man as a cause of reprobation, that some of his followers have endeavoured, in the very teeth of his own express words, to reduce his system to supralapsarianism. This was attempted by Amyraldus; who was answered by Curcellœus, in his tract "De Jure Dei in Creaturas." This last writer, partly by several of the same passages we have given above from Calvin's Institutes, and by extracts from his other writings, proves that Calvin did by no means consider man, as fallen, to be the object of reprobation; but man not yet created; man as to be created, and so reprobated, under no consideration in the Divine mind of his fall or actual guilt, except as *consequences* of an eternal preterition of the *persons* of the reprobate, resolvable only into the sovereign pleasure of God. The references he makes to men as corrupt, and to their corrupt state as the proximate cause of their rejection, are all manifestly used to parry off rather than to answer objections, and somewhat to soften, as Curcellœus observes, the harsher parts of his system. And, indeed, for what reason are we so often brought back to that unfailing refuge of Calvin and his followers, "the presumption and wickedness of replying against God?" For if reprobation be a matter of human *desert*, it cannot be a mystery; if it be adequate punishment for an adequate fault, there is no need to urge it upon us to bow with submission to an unexplained sovereignty. We may add, there is no need to speak of a remote or first cause of reprobation, if the *proximate* cause will explain the whole case; and that Calvin's continual reference to God's *secret counsel*, and *will*, and *inscrutable judgment*, could have no aptness to his argument. (2) Among English divines, Dr. Twiss has

(2) Amyraldus tamen, ut eum infra lapsum substitisse probet, in constituendo reprobationis objecto, profert quædam loca in quibus ille *corruptæ massæ* meminit, et hujus decreti æquitatem *ab originali peccato* arcessit. Sed facilis est responsio. Nam Calvinus ipse, qua ratione ista cum iis quæ attuli sint concilianda nos docet nimirum adhibita distinctione inter propinquam reprobationis causam, quam residentem in nobis corruptionem esse vult, et remotam, quæ sit unicum Dei beneplacitum. Et quanquam variis in locis causam propinquam, veluti ad sententiæ suæ duritiem emolliendam aptiorem, magis videatur urgere; ita tamen id facit ut non rarò *consilii arcani, voluntatis occultæ, judicii inscrutabilis*, et similium, quibus primam rejectionis causam solet designare, ibidem simul meminerit. (*De Jure Dei*, &c, cap. x.)

sufficiently defended Calvin from the *charge*, as he esteems it, of sublapsarianism; and, whatever merit Twiss's own supralapsarian creed may have, his argument on this point is unanswerable.

This then is the doctrine of Calvin, which was followed by several of the Churches of the reformation, who in this respect distinguished themselves from the Lutherans. (3) It was a doctrine, however, unknown in the primitive Churches; and may be ranked among those errors which the pagan philosophy subsequently engrafted upon the faith of Christ. (4)

Bishop Tomline's "Refutation of Calvinism," although very erroneous in some of its doctrinal views, has some valuable and conclusive quotations from the ancient fathers, proving "that the peculiar tenets of Calvinism are in direct opposition to the doctrines maintained in the first ages." They also show that there is a great similarity between some points in that system and several of the most prevalent of the early heresies. "The Manicheans denied the freedom of the human will; and spoke of the elect as persons who could not sin, or fail of salvation." The fruitful source of these notions was the Gnosticism of early times, which was the worst part of the speculative pagan philosophy, engrafted on a corrupted Christianity; and was vigorously opposed by the fathers, from the earliest date. In this system of affected and dreaming wisdom it was assumed, that some souls were created bad, and others good; and that they sprung, therefore, from different principles, or creators. Origen contended, in opposition to these speculations, that all souls were by nature of the same quality; that the use of the freedom of will made the differences we see in practice; and that

(3) "*The Reformed Church*, in the largest import of the word, comprises all the religious communities which have separated themselves from the Church of Rome. In this sense the words are often used by English writers; but having been adopted by the French Calvinists to describe *their* Church, this term is most commonly used on the continent as a general appellation of all the Churches who profess the doctrines of Calvin. About the year 1541, the Church of Geneva was placed by the magistrates of that city under the direction of Calvin, where his learning, eloquence, and talents for business, soon attracted general notice. By degrees his fame reached to every part of Europe. Having prevailed upon the senate of Geneva to found an academy, and place it under his superintendence; and having filled it with men, eminent throughout Europe for their learning and talent, it became the favourite resort of all persons who leaned to the new principles, and sought religious and literary instruction. From Germany, France, Italy, England, and Scotland, numbers crowded to the new academy, and returned from it to their native countries, saturated with the doctrine of Geneva; and burning with zeal to propagate its creed." (*Butler's Life of Grotius.*)

(4) This was the view of Melancthon, who, in writing to Peucer, says, "Lælius writes to me, and says, that the controversy respecting the STOICAL FATE is agitated with such uncommon fervour at Geneva, that one individual is cast into prison because he happened to differ from Zeno."

this liberty rendered them liable to reward and to punishment; ascribing, however, this recovered freedom of the will, which had been lost in Adam, to the grace of Christ. The Platonism which he mixed up with his system was justly resisted in the Church; but his doctrine of the freedom of the will prevailed generally in the east. It was afterward carried to a dangerous extent by Pelagius, whose doctrine was modified by Cassian. These discussions called Augustine into a controversy, which carried him to the opposite extreme; and appears to have revived the Manichean notions of his youth in such a degree as greatly to tinge many parts of his system with that heresy. He was a powerful, but unsteady writer; and has expressed himself so inconsistently as to have divided the opinions of the Latin Church, where his authority has always been greatest. He held, although his writings afford many passages contradictory of the statement, that "God, from the foundation of the world, decreed to save some men, and to consign others to eternal punishment." Notwithstanding his authority, his views on predestination and grace appear to have made no great impression upon even the western Church, where the Collations of Cassian, a disciple of Chrysostom, a work which has been called semi-Pelagian, was held in extensive estimation; so that substantially no great difference of opinion appeared between the western and the Greek Churches, on these points, for several centuries. In the ninth century St. Austin's doctrines were revived and asserted by Goteschale, who was as absurdly as wickedly persecuted on that account. His doctrines were condemned in two councils; and the controversy was laid to rest, until the subtle questions contained in it were revived by the schoolmen. Thomas Aquinas and the Dominicans adopted the strongest views of Augustine on predestination and necessity, and improved upon them; Scotus and the Franciscans took the opposite side; and the infallibility of the pope has not yet been employed to settle this point. By condemning Jansenius, however, while it has honoured Augustine, that Church, as Bayle observes, (*Dictionary, Art. Augustine,*) has involved itself in great perplexities. The authority of this father with the Church of Rome was indeed an advantage which the first reformers did not fail to make use of. From him they supported their views on justification by faith; and finding so much of evangelical truth on this and some other subjects in his writings, they were insensibly biassed to the worst parts of his system. Luther recovered from this error in the latter part of his life; and the Lutheran Churches settled in the doctrine of universal redemption. (5) Augustin-

(5) "It is pleasing," says Dr. Copleston, "and satisfactory, to trace the progress of Melancthon's opinions upon the subject. In the first dawning of the reformation he, as well as Luther, had been led into those metaphysical discussions which Calvin afterward moulded into a system, and incorporated with his exposition of the Christian doctrine. But so early as the year 1529 he renounced

ism, as perfected and systematized by the able hand of Calvin, was received by several of the reformed Churches; and gave rise to a controversy which has remained to this day, though happily it has of late been conducted with less asperity. The system, as issued by Calvin, has, however, undergone various modifications: some theologians and their followers, having carried out his principles to their full length, so as to advocate or sanction the Antinomian heresy, while others, either to avoid this fearful result, or perceiving the discrepancy of the harsher parts of the theory with the word of God, have impressed upon it a more mitigated aspect.

The three leading schemes of predestination, prevalent among the reformed Churches previous to the synod of Dort, are thus stated in the celebrated Declaration of Arminius before the states of Holland. They comprehend the theories generally known by the names of supralapsarian and sublapsarian.

"The FIRST, or Creabilitarian, or supralapsarian opinion, is, 1. That God has absolutely and precisely decreed to save certain particular men by his mercy or grace; but to condemn others by his justice; and to do all this, without having any regard in such decree to righteousness or sin, obedience or disobedience, which could possibly exist on the part of one class of men, or the other. 2. That for the execution of the preceding decree, God determined to create Adam, and all men in him, in an upright state of original righteousness; beside which, he also ordained them to commit sin, that they might thus become guilty of eternal condemnation, and be deprived of original righteousness. 3. That those persons whom God has thus positively wished to save, he has decreed, not only to salvation, but also to the means which pertain to it; that is, to conduct and bring them to faith in Christ Jesus, and to perseverance in that faith; and that he also leads them to these results by a grace and power that are irresistible; so that it is not possible for

this error, and expunged the passages that contained it from the later editions of his Loci Theologici. Luther, who had in his early life maintained the same opinions, after the controversy with Erasmus about free will, never taught them; and although he did not, with the candour of Melancthon, openly retract what he had once written, yet he bestowed the highest commendations on the last editions of Melancthon's Work, containing this correction. (*Preface to the first volume of Luther's Works*, A D. 1546.) He also scrupled not to assert publicly, that at the beginning of the reformation, his creed was not completely settled: (*Laur. Bempt. Lect.* note 21 to Sermon ii:) and in his last work of any importance, he is anxious to point out the qualifications with which all he had ever said, on the doctrine of absolute necessity, ought to be received." "Vos ergo, qui nunc me audistis, memineritis me hoc docuisse, non esse inquirendum de Prædestinatione *Dei abscondita*, sed in illis acquiescendum, quæ revelantur per vocationem et per ministerium verbi . . . . . Hæc eadem alibi quoque in meis libris protestatus sum, et nunc etiam viva voce trado: *Ideo sum excusatus*. (*Op* vol. vi, p. 325.)

them to do otherwise than believe, persevere in faith, and be saved. 4. That to those, whom, by his absolute will, God has foreordained to perdition, he has also decreed to deny that grace which is necessary and sufficient for salvation; and does not, in reality, confer it upon them; so that they are neither placed in a possible condition, nor in any capacity of believing, or of being saved." (6)

The SECOND opinion differs from the former; but is still supralapsarian. It is,—

"1. That God determined within himself, by an eternal immutable decree, to make, according to his good pleasure, the smaller portion out of the general mass of mankind, partakers of his grace and glory. But, according to his pleasure, he passed by the greater portion of men, and left them in their own nature, which is incapable of any thing supernatural; and did not communicate to them that saving and supernatural grace by which their nature, if it still retained its integrity, might be strengthened; or by which, if it were corrupted, it might be restored, for a demonstration of his own liberty: yet after God had made those men sinners, and guilty of death, he punished them with death eternal, for a demonstration of his justice."—"As far as we are capable of comprehending their scheme of reprobation, it consists of two acts, that of PRETERITION, and that of PREDAMNATION. PRETERITION is antecedent to all things, and to all causes which are either in the things themselves, or which arise out of them; that is, it has no regard whatever to any sin, and only views man under an absolute and general aspect. Two means are foreordained for the execution of the act of PRETERITION: *dereliction* in a state of nature which, by itself, is incapable of every thing supernatural; and the *non-communication* of supernatural grace, by which their nature, if in a state of integrity, might be strengthened, and if in a state of corruption, might be restored. PREDAMNATION is antecedent to all things; yet it does by no means exist without a foreknowledge of the cause of damnation. It views man as a sinner obnoxious to damnation in Adam, and as, on this account, perishing through the necessity of Divine justice."

This opinion differs from the first in this, that it does not lay down the creation or the fall as a *mediate cause*, foreordained of God for the execution of the decree of reprobation; yet this second kind of predestination places election, with regard to the end, *before* the fall, as also preterition, or passing by, which is the first part of reprobation. "But though the inventors of this scheme," says Arminius, "have been desirous of using the greatest precaution, lest it might be concluded from their

(6) This statement of the supralapsarian and sublapsarian theories, as given by Arminius, might be illustrated and verified by quotations from the elder Calvinistic divines: the reader will, however, find what is amply sufficient in those given in Bishop Womack's Calvinistic Cabinet Unlocked.

doctrine, that God is the author of sin with as much show of probability as it is deducible from the first scheme; yet we shall discover, that the fall of Adam cannot possibly, according to their views, be considered in any other manner than as a *necessary means* for the execution of the preceding decree of predestination. For, first, it states that God determined by the decree of reprobation to deny to man that grace which was necessary for the confirmation and strengthening of his nature, that it might not be corrupted by sin; which amounts to this, that God decreed not to bestow that grace which was necessary to avoid sin; and from this must necessarily follow the transgression of man, as proceeding from a law imposed upon him. The fall of man is, therefore, a *means* ordained for the execution of the decree of reprobation."

"2. It states the two parts of reprobation to be *preterition* and *predamnation*. Those two parts, (although the latter views man as a sinner, and obnoxious to justice,) are, according to that decree, connected together by a *necessary* and *mutual bond*, and are equally extensive; for those whom God *passed by* in conferring grace, are likewise damned. Indeed, no others are damned except those who are the subjects of this act of preterition. From this, therefore, it must be concluded, that sin necessarily follows from the decree of reprobation or preterition; because, if it were otherwise, it might possibly happen, that a person who had been *passed* by might not commit sin, and from that circumstance might not become liable to damnation. This second opinion on predestination, therefore, falls into the same inconvenience as the first,—the making God the author of sin." (*Declaration.*)

The THIRD opinion is sublapsarian; in which man, as the object of predestination, is considered as *fallen*. (7) It is thus epitomized by Arminius:—

"Because God willed within himself from all eternity to make a decree by which he might elect certain men and reprobate the rest, he

(7) The question as to the *object* of the decrees has gone out, as Goodwin says, among our Calvinistic brethren into "endless digladiations and irreconcilable divisions:—some of them hold, that men simply and indefinitely considered, are the object of these decrees. Others contend, that men considered as yet to be created, are this object. A third sort stands up against both the former with this notion, that men considered as already created, and made, are this object. A fourth disparageth the conjectures of the three former with this conceit, that men considered as fallen, are this object. Another findeth a defect in the singleness or simplicity of all the former opinions, and compoundeth this in opposition to them, that men considered both as to be created, and as being created and as fallen, together, are the proper object of these troublesome decrees. A sixth sort formeth us yet another object, and this is, man considered as salvable, or capable of being saved. A seventh not liking the faint complexion of any of the former opinions, delivereth this to us as strong and healthful, that men considered as damnable, are this object. Others yet again, superfancying all the former, conceit men, considered as *creable*, or possible to be created, to be the object so

viewed and considered the human race not only *as created*, but likewise as *fallen* or *corrupt*; and, on that account, obnoxious to malediction. Out of this lapsed and accursed state God determined to liberate certain individuals, and freely to save them by his grace, for a declaration of his mercy; but he resolved in his own just judgment, to leave the rest under malediction, for a declaration of his justice. In both these cases God acts without the least consideration of repentance and faith in those whom he elects, or of impenitence and unbelief in those whom he reprobates. This opinion places the fall of man, not as a means foreordained for the execution of the decree of predestination, as before explained; but as something that might furnish a *proœresis*, or occasion for the decree of predestination." (*Declaration.*)

With this opinion, however, the *necessity* of the fall is so generally connected, that it escapes the difficulties which environ the preceding scheme in words only; for whether, in the decree of predestination, man is considered as creatable, or created and fallen, if a necessity be laid upon any part of the race to sin, and to be made miserable, whether from that which rendered the fall inevitable, or that which rendered the fall the inevitable means of corrupting their nature, and producing entire moral disability without relief, the condition of the reprobate remains substantially the same; and the administration under which they are placed, is equally opposed to justice as to grace. For let us shut out all these fine distinctions between acts of sovereignty and acts of justice, preterition and predamnation, and fully allow the principle, that all are fallen in Adam, in what way can even the sublapsarian doctrine be supported? It has two objects: to avoid the imputation of making God the author of sin, and to repel the charge of his dealing with his creatures unjustly. We need only take the latter as necessary to the argument, and show how utterly they fail to turn aside this most fatal objection drawn from the justice of the Divine nature and administration.

It is an easy and plausible thing to say, in the usual loose and general manner of stating the sublapsarian doctrine, that the whole race having fallen in Adam, and become justly liable to eternal death, God might, without any impeachment of his justice, in the exercise of his sovereign grace, appoint some to life and salvation by Christ, and leave the others to their deserved punishment. But this is a false view of the case, built upon the false assumption that the whole race were personally and indi-

highly contested about. A ninth party disciple the world with this doctrine, that men considered as *labiles*, or capable of falling, are the object; and whether all the scattered and conflicting opinions about the objects of our brethren's decrees of election and reprobation, are bound up in this bundle or not, we cannot say." (*Agreement of Brethren, &c.*)

In modern times these subtile distinctions have rather fallen into desuetude among Calvinists, and are reducible to a much smaller number

vidually, in consequence of Adam's fall, absolutely liable to eternal death. That very fact which is the foundation of the whole scheme, is easy to be refuted on the clearest authority of Scripture; while not a passage can be adduced, we may boldly affirm, which sanctions any such doctrine.

"The wages of sin is death." That the death which is the wages or penalty of sin extends to eternal death, we have before proved. But "sin is the transgression of the law;" and in no other light is it represented in Scripture, when eternal death is threatened as its penalty, than as the act of a rational being sinning against a law known or knowable; and as an act avoidable, and not forced or necessary.

Taking these principles, let them be applied to the case before us.

The scheme of predestination in question contemplates the human race as fallen in Adam. It must, therefore, contemplate them either as seminally in Adam, not being yet born; or as to be actually born into the world.

In the former case, the only actual beings to be charged with sin, "the transgression of the law," were Adam and Eve; for the rest of the human race not being actually existent, were not capable of transgressing; or if they were, in a vague sense, capable of it by virtue of the federal character of Adam; yet then only as *potential*, and not as *actual* beings, beings, as the logicians say, *in posse*, not *in esse*. Our first parents rendered themselves liable to eternal death. This is granted; and had they died "IN THE DAY" they sinned, which, but for the introduction of a system of mercy and long suffering, and the appointment of a new kind of probation, for any thing that appears, they must have done, the human race would have perished with them, and the only conscious sinners would have been the only conscious sufferers. But then this lays no foundation for election and reprobation;—the whole race would thus have perished without the vouchsafement of mercy to any.

This predestination must, therefore, respect the human race fallen in Adam, as to be born actually, and to have a real as well as a potential existence; and the doctrine will be, that the race so contemplated were made unconditionally liable to eternal death. In this case the decree takes effect immediately upon the fall, and determines the condition of every individual, in respect to his being elected from this common misery, or his being left in it; and it rests its plea of *justice* upon the assumed fact, that every man is absolutely liable to eternal death wholly and entirely for the sin of Adam, a sin to which he was not a consenting party, because he was not in actual existence. But if eternal death be the "wages of sin;" and the sin which receives such wages be the transgression of a law by a voluntary agent, (and this is the rule as laid down by God himself,) then on no Scriptural principle is the human race to be considered absolutely liable to personal and conscious eternal death for

the sin of Adam; and so the very ground assumed by the advocates of this theory is unfounded.

But perhaps they will bring into consideration the foreknowledge of actual transgression as contemplated by the decree, though this notion is repudiated by Calvin, and the rigid divines of his school; but we reply to this, that either the sin of Adam was a sufficient reason for the actual infliction of a sentence of eternal death upon his descendants, or it was not. If not, then no man will be punished with eternal death, as the consequence of Adam's sin, and that sentence will rest upon actual transgressions alone. If, then, this be allowed, there comes in an important inquiry: Are the actual transgressions of the non-elect evitable or necessary? If the former, then even the reprobate, without the grace of Christ, which they cannot have, because he died not for them, may avoid all sin, and consequently keep the whole law of God, and claim, though still reprobates, to be justified by their works. But if sin be unavoidable and necessary as to them, in consequence both of the corrupt nature they have derived from Adam, and the withholding of that sanctifying influence which can be imparted only to the elect, for whom alone Christ died, how are they to be proved *justly* liable, on that account, to eternal death? This is the penalty of sin, of sin as the transgression of the law; but then law is given only to creatures in a state of trial, either to those who, from their unimpaired powers, are able to keep it; or to those to whom is made the promise of gracious assistance, upon their asking it, in order that they may be enabled to obey the will of God; and in no case are those to whom God issues his commands supposed in Scripture to be absolutely incapable of obedience, much less liable to be punished, without remedy, for not obeying, if so incapacitated. This would, indeed, make the Divine Being a hard master, "reaping where he has not sown;" which is the language only of the "wicked servant;" and therefore to be abhorred by all good men. But if a point so obviously at variance with truth and equity be maintained, the doctrine comes to this, that men are considered, in the Divine decree, as justly liable to eternal death, (their actual sins being foreseen,) because they have been placed by some previous decree, or higher branch of the same decree, in circumstances which necessitate them to sin: a doctrine which raises sublapsarianism into supralapsarianism itself. This is not the view which God gives us of his own justice; and it is contradicted by every notion of justice which has ever obtained among men: nor is it at all relieved by the subtilty of Zanchius and others, who distinguish between being *necessitated* to sin, and being *forced* to sin; and argue, that because in sinning the reprobate follow the motions of their own will, they are justly punishable; though in this they fulfil the predestination of God. The true question is, and it is not at all affected by such merely verbal distinctions, Can the reprobate do otherwise

men sin, and could they ever do otherwise? They sin *willingly*, it is said. This is granted; but could they ever *will* otherwise? The will is but one of many diseased powers of the soul. Is there, as to them, any cure for this disease of the will? According to this scheme, there is not; and they *will* from necessity, as well as *act* from necessity; so that the difficulty, though thrown a step backward, remains in full force.

In support of their notion, that the penalty attached to original sin is eternal death, they allege, it is true, that the Apostle Paul represents all men under condemnation in consequence of their connection with the first Adam; and attributes the salvation of those who are rescued from the ruin, only to the obedience of the second Adam. This is granted; but it will not avail to establish their position, that the human race being all under an absolute sentence of condemnation *to eternal death*, almighty God, in the exercise of his sovereign grace, elected a part of them to salvation, and left the remainder to the justice of their previous sentence.

For, 1. Supposing that the whole human race were under condemnation in their sense, this will not account for the punishment of those who reject the Gospel. Their rejecting the Gospel is represented in Scripture as the sole cause of their *condemnation*, and never merely as an aggravating cause, as though they were under an *irreversible* previous sentence of death, and that this refusal of the Gospel only heightened a previously certain and inevitable punishment. An aggravated cause of condemnation it is; but for this reason, that it is the rejection of a *remedy*, and an abuse of mercy, neither of which could have any place in a previously fixed condition of reprobation. If, therefore, it is true that "THIS is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men love darkness rather than light," we must conclude, that the previous state of condemnation was not irremediable and unalterable, or this circumstance, the rejection "of *the light*," or revelation of mercy in the Gospel, could not be their condemnation.

2. Leaving the meaning of the apostle in Rom. v, out of our consideration for a moment, the Scriptures never place the final condemnation of men upon the ground of Adam's offence, and their connection with him. ACTUAL sin forms the ground of every reproving charge; of every commination; and, beyond all doubt, of the condemnatory sentence at the day of judgment. To what ought we to refer, as explaining the true cause of the eternal punishment of any portion of our race, but to the proceedings of that day, when that eternal punishment is to be awarded? Of the reason of this proceeding, of the facts to be charged, and of the sins to be punished, we have very copious information in the Scriptures; but these are evil works, and *disbelief of the Gospel*. Nowhere is it said, or even hinted in the most distant manner, that men will be sentenced to eternal death, at that day, either because of Adam's sin

or because their connection with Adam made them inevitably corrupt in nature, and unholy in conduct; from which effects they could not escape, because God had from eternity resolved to deny them the grace necessary to this end.

3. The true view of the apostle's doctrine in Rom. v, is to be ascertained, not by making partial extracts from his discourse; but by taking the argument entire, and in all its parts.

The Calvinists assume, that the apostle represents what the penal condition of the human race would have been had not Christ interposed as our Redeemer. Here is one of their great and leading mistakes, for St. Paul does not touch this point. The Calvinist assumes, that the whole race of men, but for the decree of election, would not only have come into actual being, but have been actually and individually punished for ever; and, on this assumption, endeavours to justify his doctrine of the arbitrary selection of a part of mankind to grace and salvation, the other being left in the state in which they were found. Even this is contrary to other parts of their own system; for the reprobate are placed in an infinitely worse condition than had they been merely thus left without a share in Christ's redemption; because, even according to Calvinistic interpreters their condemnation is fearfully aggravated; and by that which they have no means of avoiding, by actual sin and unbelief. But the assumption itself is wholly imaginary. For the apostle speaks not of what the human race would have been, that is, he affirms nothing as to their penal condition, in case Christ had not undertaken the office of Redeemer; but he looks at their moral state and penal condition, as the case actually stands: in other words, he takes the state of man as it was actually established after the fall, as recorded in the book of Genesis. No child of Adam was actually born into the world until the promise of a Redeemer had been given, and the virtue of his anticipated redemption had begun to apply itself to the case of the fallen pair; consequently, all mankind are born under a constitution of mercy, which actually existed before their birth. What the race would have been, had not the redeeming plan been brought in, the Scriptures nowhere tell us, except that a sentence of death to be executed "*in the day*" in which the first pair sinned, was the sanction of the law under which they were placed; and it is great presumption to assume it as a truth, that they would have multiplied their species only for eternal destruction. That the race would have been propagated under an absolute necessity of sinning, and of being made eternally miserable, we may boldly affirm to be impossible; because it supposes an administration contradicted by every attribute which the Scriptures ascribe to God. What the actual state of the human race is, in consequence *both* of the fall of Adam and of the interposition of Christ; of the imputation of the effects of the offence of the one, and of the obedience of the other; is the only point

o which our inquiries can go, and to which, indeed, the argument of the postle is confined.

There is, it is true, an imputation of the consequences of Adam's sin o his posterity, independent of their personal offences; but we can only ascertain what these consequences are by referring to the apostle himself. One of these consequences is asserted explicitly, and others are necessarily implied in this chapter and in other parts of his writings. That which is here explicitly asserted is, that DEATH passed upon all men, though they have not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, that is, not personally; and therefore this death is to be regarded as the result of Adam's transgression alone, and of our having been so far "constituted sinners" in him, as to be liable to it. But then he death of which he *here* speaks, is the death of the body; for his argument, that "death reigned from Adam to Moses," obliges us to understand him as speaking of the visible and known fact, that men in those ages died as to the body, since he could not intend to say that all he generations of men, from Adam to Moses, died eternally. The death of the body, then, is the first effect of the imputation of Adam's in to his descendants, as stated in this chapter. A second is necessarily implied; a state of spiritual death,—the being born into the world with a corrupt nature, always tending to actual offence. This is known o be the apostle's opinion, from other parts of his writings; but that passage in this chapter in which it is necessarily implied, is verse 16: "The free gift is of *many offences* unto justification." If men need justification of "many offences;" if all men need this, and that under a dispensation of help and spiritual healing; then the *nature* which universally leads to offences so numerous must be inherently and universally corrupt. A third consequence is a *conditional* liability to eternal death; for that state which makes us liable to actual sin, makes us also liable to actual punishment. But this is conditional, not absolute; for since the apostle makes the obedience of Christ available to the forgiveness of the "many offences" we may commit in consequence of the corrupt nature we have derived from Adam, and extends this to all men, they can only perish by their own fault. Now beyond these three effects we do not find that the apostle carries the consequence of Adam's sin. Of unpardoned "offences" eternal death is the consequence; but these are personal. Of the sin of Adam, imputed, these are the consequences,—the death of the body,—and our introduction into the world with a nature tending to actual offences, and a conditional liability to punishment. But both are connected with a remedy as extensive as the disease. For the first, the resurrection from the dead; for the other, the healing of grace and the promise of pardon, and thus though "condemnation" has passed upon "*all men*," yet the free gift unto justification of life passes upon "*all men*" also,—the same general terms being

used by the apostle in each case. The effects of "the free gift" are not immediate; the reign of death remains till the resurrection; but "in Christ shall all be made alive," and it is every man's own fault, not his fate, if his resurrection be not a happy one. The corrupt nature remains till the healing is applied by the Spirit of God; but it is provided, and is actually applied in the case of all those dying in infancy, as we have already showed; (See chapter xviii, p. 3;) while justification and regeneration are offered, through specified means and conditions, to all who are of the age of reason and choice, and thus the sentence of eternal death may be reversed. What then becomes of the premises in the sublapsarian theory which we have been examining, that in Adam all men are absolutely condemned to eternal death? Had Christ not undertaken human redemption, we have no proof, no indication in Scripture, that for Adam's sin any but the actually guilty pair would have been doomed to this condemnation; and though now the race having become actually existent, is for this sin, and for the demonstration of God's hatred of sin in general, involved, through a federal relation and by an imputation of Adam's sin, in the effects above mentioned; yet a universal remedy is provided.

But we are not to be confined even to this view of the grace of God, when we speak of actual offences. Here the case is even strengthened. The redemption of Christ extends not merely to the removal of the evils laid upon us by the imputation of Adam's transgression; but to those which are the effects of our own personal choice—to the forgiveness of "many offences," upon our repentance and faith, however numerous and aggravated they may be;—to the bestowing of "abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness;"—and not merely to the reversal of the sentence of death, but to our "*reigning in life* by Jesus Christ:" so that "where sin abounded, grace did much more abound; that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness, unto *eternal life*:"—which phrase, in the New Testament, does never mean less than the glorification of the bodies and souls of believers in the kingdom of God, and in the presence and enjoyment of the eternal glory of Christ.

So utterly without foundation is the leading assumption in the sublapsarian scheme, that the decree of election and reprobation finds the human race in a state of common and absolute liability to personal eternal punishment; and that by making a sovereign selection of a part of mankind, God does no injustice to the rest by passing them by. The word of God asserts no such doctrine as the absolute condemnation of the race to eternal death, merely for Adam's offence; and if it did, the merciful result of the obedience of Christ is declared to be not only as extensive as the evil, in respect of the number of persons so involved; but in "grace" to be more abounding. Finally, this assumption fails

short of the purpose for which it is made; because the mere "passing by" of a part of the race, already, according to them, under eternal condemnation, and which they contend inflicts no injustice upon them, does not account for their additional and aggravated punishment for doing what they had never the natural or dispensed power of avoiding, —breaking God's holy laws, and rejecting his Gospel. Upon a close examination of the sublapsarian scheme, it will be found, therefore, to involve all the leading difficulties of the Calvinistic theory as it is broadly exhibited by Calvin himself. In both cases reprobation is grounded on an act of mere will, resting on no reason: it respects not in either, as its primary cause, the demerit of the creature; and it punishes eternally without personal guilt, arising either from actual sin, or from the rejection of the Gospel. Both unite in making sin a *necessary* result of the circumstances in which God has placed a great part of mankind, which, by no effort of theirs, can be avoided; or, what is the same thing, which they shall never be disposed to avoid; and how either of these schemes, in strict consequence, can escape the charge of making God the author of sin, which the synod of Dort acknowledges to be "blasphemy," is inconceivable. For how does it alter the case of the reprobate, whether the fall of Adam himself was necessitated, or whether he acted freely? *They*, at least, are necessitated to sin; they come into the world under a necessitating constitution, which is the result of an act to which they gave no consent; and their case differs nothing, except in circumstances which do not alter its essential character, from that of beings *immediately created* by God with a nature necessarily producing sinful acts, and to counteract which there is no remedy:—a case which few have been bold enough to suppose.

The different views of the doctrine of predestination, as stated above, greatly agitated the Protestant world, from the time of Calvin to the sitting of the celebrated synod of Dort, whose decisions on this point, having been received as a standard by several Churches and by many theologians, may next be properly introduced; although, after what has been said, they call only for brief remark.

"The Judgment of the synod of the Reformed Belgic Churches," to which many divines of note of other Reformed Churches were admitted, "on the articles controverted in the Belgic Churches," was drawn up in Latin, and read in the great church at Dort, in the year 1619; and a translation into English of this "Judgment," with the synod's "Rejection of Errors," was published in the same year. (*London, printed by John Bill.*) This translation having become scarce, or not being known to Mr. Scott, he published a new translation in 1818, from which, as being in more modern English, and, as far as I have compared it, unexceptionably faithful, I shall take the extracts necessary to exhibit the synod's decision on the point before us.

Art. 1. "As all men have sinned in Adam, and have become exposed to the curse and eternal death, God would have done no injustice to any one, if he had determined to leave the whole human race under sin and the curse, and to condemn them on account of sin; according to the words of the apostle, 'all the world is become guilty before God,' Rom. iii, 19. 'All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God,' 23. and 'the wages of sin is death,' Rom. vi, 23."

The synod here assumes that all men, in consequence of Adam's sin, have become exposed to the curse of "*eternal death*;" and they quote passages to prove it, which manifestly prove nothing to the point. The two first speak of actual sin; the third, of the wages, or penalty of actual sin, as the context of each will show. The very texts adduced, show how totally at a loss the synod was for any thing like Scriptural evidence of this strange doctrine; which, however, as we have seen, would not, if true, help them through their difficulties, seeing it leaves the punishment of the reprobate for actual sin and for disbelief of the Gospel, still unaccounted for on every principle of justice.

Art. 4. "They who believe not the Gospel, on them the wrath of God remaineth; but those who receive it, and embrace the Saviour Jesus with a true and living faith, are, through him, delivered from the wrath of God, and receive the gift of everlasting life."

To this there is nothing to object; only it is to be observed, that those who are not elected to eternal life out of the common mass, are not, according to this article, merely left and passed by; but are brought under an obligation of believing the Gospel, which, nevertheless, is no "good news" to them, and in which they have no interest at all; and yet, in default of believing, "the wrath of God abideth upon them." Thus there is, in fact, no alternative for them. They cannot believe, or else it would follow that those reprobated might be saved; and, therefore, the wrath of God "abideth upon them," for no *fault* of their own. This, however, the next article denies.

Art. 5. "The cause or *fault* of this unbelief, as also of all other sins, is by no means in God; but in man. But faith in Jesus Christ, and salvation by him, is the *free gift* of God. 'By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God,' Eph. ii, 8. In like manner, 'it is *given* to you to believe in Christ,' Phil. i, 29."

These passages would be singular proofs that the *fault* of unbelief is in men themselves, did not the next article explain the connection between them and the premises in the minds of the synodists. A much more appropriate text, but a rather difficult one on their theory, would have been, "ye have not, because ye ask not."

Art. 6. 'That some, *in time*, have faith given them by God, and others have it not given, proceeds from his *eternal decree*; for 'known

› *God are all his works from the beginning of the world,*' Acts xv,

According to which decree, he gradually softens the hearts of the t, however hard, and he bends them to believe; but the non-elect leaves, *in just judgment*, to their own perversity and hardness.— l here, especially, a deep discrimination, at the same time both ciful and just; a discrimination of men equally lost, opens itself to or that decree of election and reprobation which is revealed in the d of God; which as perverse, impure, and unstable persons do wrest heir own destruction, so it affords ineffable consolation to holy and s souls."

'o this article the synod appends no Scripture proofs; which if the rines it contains were, as the synodists say, "revealed in the word of ," would not have been wanting. The passage which stands in the ile of the article could scarcely be intended as a proof, since it ld equally apply to any other doctrine which does not shut out the cience of God. The doctrine of the two articles just quoted, will een by taking them together. The position laid down is, that "the lt" of not believing the Gospel is "*in man.*" The alleged proof of is, that faith is the *gift* of God. But this only proves that the fault ot believing is in man, just as it allows that God, the giver of faith, illing to give faith to those who have it not, and that they will not ive it. In no other way can it prove the faultiness of man; for to t end are we taught that faith is the gift of God in order to prove fault of not believing to be in man, if God will not bestow the gift, if man cannot believe without such bestowment? This, however, recisely what the synod teaches. It argues, that faith is the gift lod; that it is only given to "*some;*" and that this proceeds from 's "eternal decree." So that, by virtue of this decree, he gives to some, and withholds it from others, who are, thereupon, left out the power of believing; and for this *act of God*, therefore, and for a fault of their own, they are punished eternally. And yet synod calls this a "just judgment; affording ineffable consolation oly souls," and a "doctrine only rejected by the perverse and re!"

s we have already quoted and commented on the 7th and 8th arti- on election, we proceed to

rt. 10. "Now the cause of this gratuitous election is the sole good sure of God; not consisting in this, that he elected into the condi- of salvation certain qualities or human actions, from all that were ible; but in that, out of the common multitude of sinners, he took imself certain persons as his peculiar property, according to the pture, 'for the *children* being not born, neither having done any l or evil, &c, it is said (that is to Rebecca) the elder shall serve younger; even as it is written, Jacob have I loved; but Esau have

I hated,' Rom ix, 11–13. 'And as many as were ordained to eternal life believed,' Acts xiii, 48."

Thus the ground of this election is resolved wholly into the "good pleasure of God," (est solum Dei beneplacitum,) "having no respect, as to its REASON, or CONDITION, though it may have as to its END, to any foreseen faith, obedience of faith, or any other good quality and disposition," as it is expressed in the preceding article. Let us, then, see how the case stands with the reprobate.

Art. 15. "Moreover, Holy Scripture doth illustrate and commend to us this eternal and free grace of our election, in this more especially, that it doth also testify all men not to be elected; but that some are *non-elect*, or *passed by* in the eternal election of God: whom, truly, God, from most free, just, irreprehensible, and immutable good pleasure, decreed to leave in the *common misery* into which they had, by *their own fault*, cast themselves, and *not to bestow on them living faith, and the grace* of conversion; but having left them in their own ways, and under just judgment, at length, not only on account of their unbelief, but also of all *their other sins*, to condemn, and eternally punish them for the manifestation of his own justice. And this is the decree of *reprobation* which determines that God is in no wise the author of sin; (which, to be thought of, is blasphemy;) but a tremendous, irreprehensible, just Judge and avenger."

Thus we hear the synodists confessing, in the same breath in which they plausibly represent reprobation as a mere *passing by* and leaving men "in the *common misery*," that the reprobate are punishable for their "unbelief and other sins," and so this decree imports, therefore, much more than leaving men in the "*common misery*." For this "common misery" can mean no more than the misery common to all mankind by the sin of Adam, into which his fall plunged the elect, as well as the reprobate; and to be "*left*" in it, must be understood of being left to the sole consequences of that offence. Now, were it even to be conceded that these consequences extend to *personal and conscious eternal punishment*, which has been disproved; yet, even then, their decree has a much more formidable aspect, terrible and repulsive as this alone would be. For we are expressly told, that God not only "decreed to leave them in this misery," but "not to bestow on them living faith, and the grace of conversion;" and then to condemn, and eternally punish them, "on account of their unbelief," which by their own showing, these reprobates could not avoid; and for "all their other sins," which they could not but commit, since it was "decreed" to deny to them "the grace of conversion." Thus the case of the reprobate is deeply aggravated, beyond what it could have been if they had been merely "left in the common misery;" and the synod and its followers have, therefore, the task of showing, how the punishing of men for what they never could avoid, and

hich, it was expressly decreed they never should avoid, "is a manistation of the justice" of almighty God.

From the above extracts it will be seen how little reason Mr. Scott ad to reprove Dr. Heylin with "bearing false witness against his eighbour," (*Scott's Translation of the Articles of the Synod of Dort*, . 120,) on account of having given a summary of the eighteen articles f the synod, on predestination, in the following words:—"That God, y an absolute decree, hath elected to salvation a very small number f men, without any regard to their faith and obedience whatsoever; and ecluded from saving grace all the rest of mankind, and appointed them y the same decree to eternal damnation, without any regard to their nfidelity and impenitency." Whether Mr. Scott understood this conoversy or not, Dr. Heylin shows, by this summary, that he neither isapprehended it, nor bore "false witness against his neighbour," in stating it; for as to the stir made about his rendering "*multitudo*" a ery small number, this verbal inaccuracy affects not the merits of the octrine; and neither the synodists, nor any of their followers, ever llowed the elect to be a very great number. The number, less or ore, alters not the doctrine. With respect to the elect, the synod onfesses, that the decree of election has no regard, as a cause, to faith nd obedience foreseen in the persons so elected; and with respect to e reprobate, although it is not so explicit in asserting that the decree f reprobation has no regard to their infidelity and impenitency, the regoing extracts cannot possibly be interpreted into any other meang. For it is manifestly in vain for the synodists to attempt, in the 5th article, to gloss over the doctrine, by saying that men "*cast themsles* into the common misery by their *own fault*," when they only mean at they were cast into it by Adam and by *his* fault. If they intended ground their decree of reprobation on foresight of the *personal* offences f the reprobate, they would have said this in so many words; but the aterials of which the synod was composed forbade such a declaration; nd they themselves, in the "Rejection of Errors," appended to their hapter "*De divina Prædestinatione*," place in this list "the errors of ose who teach that God has not decreed, from his own *mere just will*, leave any *in the fall of Adam*, and in the common state of sin and amnation, or to pass them by in the communication of grace necessary faith and conversion;" quoting as a proof of this dogma, "He hath ercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth," nd giving no intimation that they understand this passage in any other ense than Calvin and his immediate followers have uniformly affixed to t. What Dr. Heylin has said is here, then, abundantly established; r if the decree of reprobation is to be referred to God's "*mere* will," nd if its operation is to leave the reprobate "*in the fall of Adam*," and to pass them by in that communication of grace which is *necessary* to

faith and conversion," the decree itself is that which prevents both penitence and faith, and stands upon some other ground than the personal infidelity and impenitency of the reprobate, and cannot have "any regard" to either, except as a part of its own dread consequences: a view of the matter which the supralapsarians would readily admit. How their doctrine, so stated by themselves, could give the synod any reason to complain, as they do in their conclusion, that they were slandered by their enemies when they were charged with teaching, "that God, by the bare and mere determination of his will, without any respect of the sin of *any* man, predestinated and created the greatest part of the world to eternal damnation," will not be very obvious; or why they should startle at the same doctrine in one dress which they themselves have but clothed in another. The fact is, that the divisions in the synod obliged the leading members, who were chiefly stout supralapsarians, to qualify their doctrine somewhat *in words*, while substantially it remained the same; but what they lost by giving up a few words in one place, they secured by retaining them in another, or by resorting to subtilties not obvious to the commonalty. Of this subtilty, the apparent disclaimer just quoted is in proof. When they seem to deny that God reprobates without any respect to the sin of *any* man, they may mean that he had respect to the sin of Adam, or to sin in Adam; for they do not deny that they reject *personal* sin as a ground of reprobation. Even when they appear to allow that God had, in reprobation, respect to the corruption of human nature, or even to personal transgression, they never confess that God had respect to sin, in either sense, as the *impulsive* or meritorious cause of reprobation. But the greatest subtilty remains behind; for the synod says nothing, in this complaint and apparent rejection of the doctrine charged upon them by their adversaries, but what all the supralapsarian divines would say.—These, as we have seen, make a distinction between the two parts of the decree of reprobation,—PRETERITION and PREDAMNATION, the latter of which must always have respect to actual sin; and hence arises their distinction between "*destruction*" and "*damnation*." For they say, it is one thing to predestinate and create to *damnation*, and another to predestinate and create to *destruction*. Damnation, being the sentence of a judge, must be passed in consideration of sin; but destruction may be the act of a *sovereign*, and so inflicted by right of dominion. (8) The synod would have disallowed something substantial,

(8) "Non solent enim supralapsarii dicere Deum quosdam ad æternam *damnationem* creasse et prædestinasse; eo quod damnatio actum judicialem designet, ac proinde peccati meritum præsupponat; sed malunt uti voce *exitii*, ad quod Deus, tanquam absolutus Dominus, jus habeat creandi et destinandi quoscunque voluerit." (*Curcellæus De Jure Dei*, &c, cap. x. *See also Bishop* WOMACK'S *Calvinistic Cabinet*, &c, p. 394.)

had they denied that God created any man to *destruction*, without respect to sin, and were safe enough in allowing that he has created none, without respect to sin, unto *damnation*. But among the errors on predestination, which they formally "reject," and which they place under nine distinct heads, thus attempting to guard the pure and orthodox doctrine as to this point on the right hand and on the left, they are careful not to condemn the supralapsarian doctrine, or to place even its highest branches among the doctrines disavowed.

The doctrine of the Church of Scotland, on these topics, is expressed in the answers to the 12th and 13th questions of its large catechism: "God's decrees are the wise, free, and holy acts of the counsel of his will; whereby, from all eternity, he hath, for his own glory, unchangeably foreordained whatsoever comes to pass in time, especially concerning angels and men"—"God, by an eternal and immutable decree, out of his mere love, for the praise of his glorious grace to be manifested in due time, hath elected *some angels* to glory; and, in Christ, hath chosen *some men* to eternal life and the *means thereof;* and also, according to his sovereign power and the unsearchable counsel of his own will, (whereby he extendeth or withholdeth favour as he pleaseth,) hath *passed by* and foreordained the rest to dishonour and wrath, to be *for their sin* inflicted, to the praise of the glory of his justice."

In this general view there appears a strict conformity to the opinions of Calvin, as before given. All things are the subjects of decree and pre ordination; election and reprobation are grounded upon the *mere will* of God; election is the choosing men, not only to salvation, but to *the means* of salvation; from which the reprobates are therefore excluded, as passed by, and foreordained to wrath; and yet though the "means of salvation" are never put within their reach, this wrath is inflicted upon them "*for their sin;*" and to the praise of God's justice! The Church of Scotland adopts, also, the notion that decrees of election and reprobation extend to *angels* as well as men; a pretty certain proof that the framers of this catechism were not sublapsarians, for as to angels, there could be no election *out of* a "common misery;" and with Calvin, therefore, they choose to refer the whole to the arbitrary pleasure and will of God.—"The angels who stood in their integrity, Paul calls *elect;* if their constancy rested on the Divine pleasure, the defection of others argues their having been forsaken: (direlectos,) a fact, for which no other cause can be assigned, than the reprobation hidden in the secret counsel of God."

The ancient Church of the Vaudois, in the valleys of Piedmont, have a confession of faith, bearing date A. D. 1120; and which, probably, transmits the opinions of much more ancient times. The only article which bears upon the extent of the death of Christ is drawn up, as might be expected in an age of the Church when it was received, as a matter

almost entirely undisputed, that Christ died for the salvation of the whole world. Art. 8. "Christ is our life, truth, peace, and righteousness; also our pastor, advocate, sacrifice, and priest, who died for the salvation of all those that believe, and is risen again for our justification."

The Confession of Faith, published by the Churches of Piedmont in 1655, bears a different character. In the year 1630, a plague which was introduced from France into these valleys, swept off all the ministers but *two*, and with them ended the race of their ancient barbes, or pastors. (*See "Historical Defence, &c, of the Waldenses," by Sim's.*) The Vaudois were then under the necessity of applying to the reformed Churches of France and Geneva for a supply of ministers; and with them came in the doctrine of Calvin in an authorized form. It was thus embodied in the Confession of 1655. Art. 11. "God saves from corruption and condemnation those whom he has chosen from the foundation of the world, not for any disposition, faith, or holiness, that he foresaw in them, but of his mere mercy in Jesus Christ his Son: *passing by* all the rest, according to the *irreprehensible reason* of *his free will and justice.*" The last clause is expressed in the very words of Calvin.

The 12th article in the Confession of the French Churches, 1558, is, in substance, Calvinistic, though brief and guarded in expression. "We believe, that out of this general corruption and condemnation in which all men are plunged, God doth deliver them whom he hath, in his eternal and unchangeable counsel, chosen of his mere goodness and mercy, through our Lord Jesus Christ, without any consideration of their works, leaving the rest in their sins, and damnable estate, that he may show forth in them his justice, as, in the elect, he doth most illustriously declare the riches of his mercy. For one is not better than another, until such time as God doth make the difference, according to his unchangeable purpose which he hath determined in Jesus Christ before the creation of the world." (*Quick's "Synodicon in Gallia Reformata."*) This confession was drawn up by Calvin himself, though not in language so strong as he usually employs; which, perhaps, indicates that the majority of the French pastors were inclined to the sublapsarian theory, and did not, in every point, coincide with their great master.

The Westminster Confession gives the sentiments both of the English Presbyterian Churches, and the Church of Scotland. (9) Chapter iii treats of the predestination.

"By the decree of God, for the manifestation of his glory, some men

(9) The title of it is, "The Confession of Faith agreed upon by the Assembly of Divines at Westminster, with the assistance of Commissioners from the Church of Scotland." The date of the ordinance for convening this assembly is 1643. The Confession was approved by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in 1647

and angels are predestinated unto everlasting life, and others foreordained to everlasting death. These angels and men thus predestinated and foreordained, are particularly, and unchangeably designed; and *their number is so certain and definite*, that it cannot either be increased or diminished. Those of mankind that are predestinated unto life, God, before the foundation of the world was laid, according to his eternal and immutable purpose, and the secret counsel and good pleasure of his will, hath chosen in Christ unto everlasting glory, out of his mere free grace and love, without any foresight of faith and good works, or perseverance in either of them, or any other thing in the creature as conditions or causes moving him thereunto; and all to the praise of his glorious grace. As God hath appointed the elect unto glory, so hath he, by the eternal and most free purpose of his will, foreordained all the means thereunto. Wherefore, they who are elected, being fallen in Adam, are redeemed by Christ; are effectually called unto faith in Christ, by his Spirit working in due season; are justified, adopted, sanctified, and kept by his power, through faith unto salvation; neither are *any other redeemed by Christ*, effectually called, justified, adopted, sanctified, and saved, but the elect only. The rest of mankind God was pleased, *according to the unsearchable counsel of his own will*, whereby he extendeth or withholdeth mercy as he pleaseth, *for the glory of his sovereign power* over his creatures, *to pass by*, and to ordain them to dishonour and wrath for their sin, to the praise of his glorious justice."

Here we have no attempts at qualification after the example of the synod of Dort; but the whole is conformed to the higher and most unmitigated parts of the Institutes of Calvin. By the side of the Presbyterian Confession, the seventeenth article of the Church of England must appear exceedingly moderate; and, as to *Calvinistic predestination*, to say the least, equivocal. It never gave satisfaction to the followers of Calvin, who had put his stronger impress upon the Augustinism which floated in the minds of many of the divines of the reformation, who generally, as appears from the earliest Protestant confessions and catechisms, (1) thought fit to recommend that either these points should not be touched at all, or so speak of them as to admit great latitude of interpretation, and that, probably, in charitable respect to the varying opinions of the theologians and Churches of the day. It is of the perfected form of Calvinism that Arminius speaks, when he says, "It neither agrees

(1) The Augsburg Confession says, "Non est hic opus disputationibus de prædestinatione et similibus. Nam promissio est universalis et nihil detrahit operibus, sed exsuscitat ad fidem et vere bona opera."—Act 20. And the Saxon Confession is equally indifferent to the subject. "Non addimus hic quæstiones de prædestinatione seu de electione; sed deducimus omnes lectores ad verbum Dei, et jubemus ut voluntatem Dei verbo ipsius discant sicut Æternus Pater expressa voce præcipit, *hunc audite*." (*Art. de Remiss. Pecc.*)

nor corresponds with the harmony of those confessions which were published together in one volume at Geneva, in the name of the reformed and Protestant Churches. If that harmony of confessions be faithfully consulted, it will appear, that many of them do not speak in the same manner concerning predestination; that some of them only incidentally mention it, and that they evidently never once touch upon those heads of the doctrine which are now in great repute, and particularly urged in the preceding scheme of predestination. The confessions of Bohemia, England, and Wirtemburg, and the first Helvetian Confession, and that of the four cities of Strasburgh, Constance, Memmingen, and Lindau, make no mention of this predestination: those of Basle and Saxony only take a very cursory notice of it in three words. The Augustan Confession speaks of it in such a manner as to induce the Genevan editors to think that some annotation was necessary on their part to give us a previous warning. The last of the Helvetian Confessions, to which a great portion of the reformed Churches have expressed their assent, likewise speaks of it in such a strain as makes me very desirous to see what method can possibly be adopted to give it any accordance with that doctrine of the predestination which I have stated. Without the least contention or cavilling it may be very properly made a subject of doubt, whether this doctrine agrees with the Belgic Confession and the Heidelberg Catechism." (*Nichol's Works of Arminius*, vol. i, p. 557.)

I have given these extracts to show that nothing in the preceding discussion has been assumed as Calvinism, but what is to be found in the writings of the founder of the system, and in the confessions and creeds of Churches which professedly admitted his doctrine.

With respect to modifications of this system, the sublapsarian theory has been already considered and shown to be substantially the same as the system which it professes to mitigate and improve. We may now adduce another modified theory; but shall, upon examination, find it but little, if at all, removed out of the reach of those objections which have been stated to the various shades of the predestinating scheme already noticed.

That scheme is in England usually called Baxterianism, from the celebrated BAXTER, who advocated it in his Treatise *of Universal Redemption*, and in his *Methodus Theologiæ*. He was, however, in this theory but the disciple of certain divines of the French Protestant Church, whose opinions created many dissensions abroad, and produced so much warmth of opposition from the Calvinistic party, that they were obliged first to engage in the hopeless attempt of softening down the harsher aspects of the doctrine of Calvin and the synod of Dort, in order to keep themselves in countenance; then to attack the Arminians with asperity, in order to purge themselves of the suspicion of entire hetero-

doxy in a Calvinistic Church; and, finally, to withdraw from the contest. The Calvinism of the Church of France was, however, much mitigated in subsequent times by the influence of the writings of these theologians; a result which also has followed in England from the labours of Baxter, who, though he formed no separate school, has had numerous followers in the Calvinistic Churches of this country. The real author of the scheme, at least, in a systematized form, was CAMERO, who taught divinity at Saumur, and it was unfolded and defended by his disciple Amyraldus, to whom Curcellæus replied in the work from which I have above made some quotations. Baxter says, in his preface to his *Saints' Rest*, "The middle way which Camero, Crocius, Martinius, Amyraldus, Davenant, with all the divines of Britain and Bremen, in the synod of Dort go, I think is nearest the truth of any that I know who have written on these points." (2) This system he laboured powerfully to defend, and his works on this subject, although his system is often spoken of, being but little known to the general reader, the following exhibition of this scheme, from his work entitled "Universal Redemption," may be acceptable. It makes great concessions to that view of the Scriptural doctrine which we have attempted to establish; but, for want of going another step, it is, perhaps, the most inconsistent theory to which the varied attempts to modify Calvinism have given rise. Baxter first differs from the majority of Calvinists, though not from all, in his statement of the doctrine of satisfaction.

"Christ's sufferings were not a *fulfilling* of the *law's threatening*, (though he bore its *curse materially*;) but a satisfaction for our *not fulfilling* the *precept*, and to prevent *God's fulfilling* the *threatening* on us."

"Christ paid not, therefore, the *idem*, but the *tantundem*, or *æquivalens*; not the *very debt* which we owed and the law required, but the *value*; (else it were not *strictly satisfaction*, which is *redditio æquivalentis*:) and (it being improperly called the *paying of a debt*, but properly *a suffering for the guilty*) the *idem* is nothing but *supplicium delinquentis*. In *criminals*, *dum alius solvet simul aliud solvitur*. The law knoweth no *vicarius pœnæ*; though the *law maker* may admit it, as he is *above law*; else there were no place for *pardon*, if the *proper debt* be paid and the *law not relaxed* but *fulfilled*."

"Christ did neither *obey* nor *suffer* in any man's *stead*, by a *strict*, *proper representation* of his *person* in point of law; so as that the *law* should take it as done or suffered by the *party himself*. But only as a *third*

(2) Of Camero, or Cameron, Amyraldus, Curcellæus, and the controversy in which they were engaged, see an interesting account in Nichol's Arminianism and Calvinism Compared, vol i, appendix c; a work of elaborate research, and abounding with the most curious information as to the opinions and history of those times.

person as a *mediator*, he voluntarily bore what else the sinner should have borne."

"To assert the contrary (especially as to particular persons considered in actual sin) is to overthrow all Scripture theology, and to introduce all Antinomianism; to overthrow all possibility of pardon, and assert justification before we sinned or were born, and to make ourselves to have satisfied God.

"Therefore we must not say that *Christ died nostro loco*, so as to *personate us*, or *represent our persons* in *law sense;* but only to bear what else we must have borne." (*Universal Redemption*, pp. 48–51.)

This system explicitly asserts, that Christ made a satisfaction by his death equally for the sins of every man; and thus Baxter essentially differs both from the rigid Calvinists, and also from the sublapsarians, who, though they may allow that the reprobate derive some benefits from Christ's death, so that there is a vague sense in which he may be said to have died for all men, yet they, of course, deny to such the benefit of Christ's satisfaction or atonement which Baxter contends for.

"Neither the law, whose curse Christ bore, nor God, as the legislator to be satisfied, did distinguish between men as elect and reprobate, or as believers and unbelievers, *de presenti vel de futuro;* and to impose upon Christ, or require from him satisfaction for the sins of one sort more than of another, but for mankind in general.

"God the Father, and Christ the Mediator, now dealeth with no man upon the mere rigorous terms of the first law; (*obey perfectly and live, else thou shalt die;*) but giveth to all much mercy, which, according to the tenor of that violated law, they could not receive, and calleth them to repentance, in order to their receiving farther mercy offered them. And accordingly he will not judge any at last according to the mere law of works, but as they have obeyed or not obeyed his conditions or terms of grace.

"It was not the *sins* of the *elect only*, but of all *mankind fallen*, which lay upon Christ satisfying. And to assert the contrary, injuriously diminisheth the honour of his sufferings; and hath other desperate ill consequences." (*Universal Redemption*, pp. 36, 37, and 50.)

The benefits derived to all men *equally*, from the satisfaction of Christ, he thus states,—

"All mankind *immediately* upon Christ's satisfaction, are redeemed and delivered from that legal necessity of perishing which they were under, (not by remitting sin or punishment directly to them, but by giving up God's *jus puniendi* into the hands of the Redeemer; nor by giving any right directly to them, but *per meram resultantiam* this happy change is made for them in their relation, upon the said remitting of God's right and advantage of justice against them,) and they are given

up to the Redeemer as their owner and ruler, to be dealt with upon terms of mercy which have a tendency to their recovery.

"God the Father and Christ the Mediator hath freely, without any prerequisite condition on man's part, enacted a law of grace of universal extent, in regard of its tenor, by which he giveth, as a deed of gift, Christ himself, with all his following benefits which he bestoweth; (as benefactor and legislator;) and this to all alike, without excluding any; upon condition they believe, and accept the offer.

"By this law, testament, or covenant, *all men are conditionally* pardoned, justified, and reconciled to God already, and no man absolutely; nor doth it make a difference, nor take notice of any till men's performance or non-performance of the condition makes a difference.

"In the new law Christ hath truly *given himself* with a *conditional pardon, justification,* and *conditional right to salvation,* to all men in the *world, without exception.*" (*Universal Redemption*, p. 36, &c.)

On the case of the heathen:—

"Though God hath been pleased less clearly to acquaint us on what terms he dealeth with those that hear not of Christ, yet it being most clear and certain, that he dealeth with them on terms of general grace, and not on the terms of the rigorous law of works; this may evince them to be the Mediator's subjects, and redeemed.

"Though it be very difficult, and not very necessary, to know what is the condition prescribed to them that hear not of Christ, or on what terms Christ will judge them; yet, to me it seems to be the covenant made with *Adam*, Gen. iii, 15, which they are under, requiring their taking God to be their only God and Redeemer, and to expecting mercy from him and loving him above all, as their end and chief good; and repenting of sin, and sincere obedience, according to the laws promulgated to them, to lead them farther.

"All those that have not heard of Christ, have yet much mercy which they receive from him, and is the fruit of his death: according to the well or ill using whereof it seems possible that God will judge them.

"It is a course to blind, and not to inform men, to lay the main stress in the doctrine of redemption upon our uncertain conclusions of God's dealing with such as never heard of Christ, seeing all proof is *per notiora;* and we must reduce points uncertain to the certain, and not the certain to the uncertain, in our trial." (*Universal Redemption*, pp. 37, 38, and 54.)

In arguments drawn from the consequences which follow the denial of "universal satisfaction," Baxter is particularly terse and conclusive.

"The doctrine which denieth universal satisfaction hath all these inconveniences and absurd consequents following: therefore it is not of God, nor true.

"It either denieth the universal promise or conditional gift of pardon and life to all men if they will believe, and then it overturneth the sub-

stance of Christ's law and Gospel promise; or else it maketh God to give conditionally to all men a pardon and salvation which Christ never purchased, and without his dying for men.

"It maketh God either not to offer the effects of Christ's satisfaction (pardon and life) to all, but only to the elect; or else to offer that which is not, and which he cannot give.

"It denieth the direct object of faith, and of God's offer, that is *Christum qui satisfecit*, (a Christ that hath satisfied.)

"It either denieth the non-elect's deliverance from that flat necessity of perishing, which came on man for sinning against the first law, by its remediless, unsuspended obligation; (and so neither Christ, Gospel, or mercy, had ever any nature of a remedy to them, nor any more done toward their deliverance than toward the deliverance of the devils;) or else it maketh this deliverance and remedy to be without satisfaction by Christ for them.

"It either denieth that God commandeth all to believe, (but only the elect;) or else maketh God to assign them a deceiving object for their faith, commanding them to believe in that which never was, and to trust in that which would deceive them if they did trust it.

"It maketh God either to have appointed and commanded the non-elect to use no means at all for their recovery and salvation, or else to have appointed them means which are all utterly useless and insufficient, for want of a prerequisite cause without them; yea, which imply a contradiction.

"It maketh the true and righteous God to make promises of pardon and salvation to all men on condition of believing, which he neither would nor could perform, (for want of such satisfaction to his justice,) if they did believe.

"It denieth the true sufficiency of Christ's death for the pardoning and saving of all men, if they did believe.

"It makes the cause of men's damnation to be principally for want of an expiatory sacrifice and of a Saviour, and not of believing.

"It leaveth all the world, elect as well as others, without any ground and object for the first justifying faith, and in an utter uncertainty whether they may believe to justification or not.

"It denieth the most necessary humbling aggravation of men's sins, so that neither the minister can tell wicked men that they have sinned against him that bought them, nor can any wicked man so accuse himself; no, nor any man that doth not know himself to be elect: they cannot say, my sins put Christ to death, and were the cause of his sufferings: nay, a minister cannot tell any man in the world, certainly, (their sins put Christ to death,) because he is not certain who is elect or sincere in the faith.

"It subverteth Christ's new dominion and government of the world, and his general legislation and judgment according to his law, which is

now founded in his title of redemption, as the first dominion and government was on the title of creation.

"It maketh all the benefits that the non-elect receive, whether spiritual or corporal; and so even the relaxation of the curse of the law, (without which relaxation no man could have such mercies,) to befall men without the satisfaction of Christ; and so either make satisfaction, as to all those mercies, needless, or else must find another satisfier.

"It maketh the law of grace to contain far harder terms than the law of works did in its utmost rigour.

"It maketh the law of *Moses* either to bind all the non-elect still to all ceremonies and bondage ordinances, (and so sets up Judaism,) or else to be abrogated and taken down, and men delivered from it, without Christ's suffering for them.

"It destroys almost the whole work of the ministry, disabling ministers either to humble men by the chiefest aggravations of their sins, and to convince them of ingratitude and unkind dealing with Christ, or to show them any hopes to draw them to repentance, or any love and mercy tending to salvation to melt and win them to the love of Christ; or any sufficient object for their faith and affiance, or any means to be used for pardon or salvation, or any promise to encourage them to come in, or any threatening to deter them.

"It makes God and the Redeemer to have done no more for the remedying of the misery of most of fallen mankind than for the devils, nor to have put them into any more possibility of pardon or salvation.

"Nay, it makes God to have dealt far hardlier with most men than with the devils; making them a law which requireth their believing in one that never died for them, and taking him for their Redeemer that never redeemed them, and that on the mere foresight that they would not believe it, or decree that they should not; and so to create by that law a necessity of their far sorer punishment, without procuring them any possibility of avoiding it.

"It makes the Gospel of its own nature to be the greatest plague and judgment to most of men that receive it, that ever God sendeth to men on earth, by binding them over to a greater punishment, and aggravating their sin, without giving them any possibility of remedy.

"It maketh the case of all the world, except the elect, as deplorate, remediless, and hopeless, as the case of the damned, and so denieth them to have any day of grace, visitation, or salvation, or any price for happiness put into their hands.

"It maketh Christ to condemn men to hell fire for not receiving him for their Redeemer that never redeemed them, and for not resting on him for salvation by his blood, which was never shed for them, and for not repenting unto life, when they had no hope of mercy, and faith and repentance could not have saved them.

"It putteth sufficient excuses into the mouths of the condemned.

"It maketh the torments of conscience in hell to be none at all, and teacheth the damned to put away all their sorrows and self accusations.

"It denieth all the privative part of those torments which men are obliged to suffer by the obligation of Christ's law, and so maketh hell either no hell at all, or next to none.

"And I shall anon show how it leads to infidelity and other sins, and, after this, what face of religion is left unsubverted? Not that I charge those that deny universal satisfaction with holding all these abominations; but their doctrine of introducing them by necessary consequence: it is the opinion and not the men that I accuse."

A thorough Arminian could say nothing stronger than what is asserted in several of the above quotations; and, perhaps, what might not be borne from him, may call attention from Baxter, and happy would it be if every advocate of Calvin's reprobation would give these "CONSEQUENTS," a candid consideration.

The peculiarity of Baxter's scheme will be seen from the following farther extracts; and, after all, it singularly leaves itself open to almost all the objections which he so powerfully urges against Calvinism itself.

"Though Christ *died equally for all men*, in the aforesaid *law sense*, as he satisfied the offended *legislator*, and as giving himself *to all alike* in the *conditional covenant;* yet he NEVER PROPERLY INTENDED OR PURPOSED THE ACTUAL JUSTIFYING AND SAVING OF ALL, NOR of ANY but those that come to be justified and saved: he did not, therefore, die for all, nor for any that perish, with a decree or resolution to save them, MUCH LESS DID HE DIE FOR ALL ALIKE, AS TO THIS INTENT.

"Christ hath given FAITH to none by his law or testament, though he hath revealed, that to some he will, as benefactor and DOMINUS ABSOLUTUS, give that grace which shall infallibly produce it; and God hath given some to Christ that he might prevail with them accordingly; yet this is no giving *it to the person*, nor hath he in himself ever the more title to it, nor can any lay claim to it as their due.

"It belongeth not to Christ as *satisfier*, nor yet as *legislator*, to make wicked refusers to become willing, and receive him and the benefits which he offers; therefore he may do all for them that is fore-expressed, though he cure not their unbelief.

"Faith is a fruit of the death of Christ, (and so is all the good which we do enjoy,) but not *directly*, as it is *satisfaction* to *justice;* but only *remotely*, as it proceedeth from that JUS DOMINII which Christ has received to send the Spirit in what measure and TO WHOM HE WILL, and to succeed it accordingly; and as it is necessary to the attainment of the farther ends of his death in the certain gathering and saving of THE ELECT." (*Universal Redemption*, p. 63, &c.)

Thus, then, the whole theory comes to this, that, although a condi

final salvation has been purchased by Christ for all men, and is offered to them, and all legal difficulties are removed out of the way of their pardon as sinners by the atonement, yet Christ hath not purchased for any man the gift of FAITH, *or the power of performing the condition of salvation required;* but gives this to some, and does not give it to others, by virtue of that *absolute dominion* over men which he has purchased for himself; so that, in fact, the old scheme of election and reprobation still comes in, only with this difference, that the Calvinists refer that decree to the sovereignty of the *Father*, Baxter to the sovereignty of the *Son;* one makes the decree of reprobation to issue from the Creator and Judge; the other, (which is indeed the more repulsive view,) from the Redeemer himself, who has purchased even those to whom he denies the gift of faith with his own most precious blood. This is plain from the following quotation:—

"God did not give Christ faith for his blood shed in exchange; the thing that God was to give the Son for his satisfaction, was dominion and rule of the redeemed creature, and power therein to use what means he saw fit for the bringing in of souls to himself, even to send forth *so much of his word and Spirit as he pleased;* both the Father and Son resolving, from eternity, to prevail infallibly *with all the elect;* but never did Christ desire at his Father's hands that all whom he satisfied for, should be infallibly and irresistibly brought to believe, nor did God ever grant or promise any such thing. Jesus Christ, as a ransom, died for all, and as *Rector per leges*, or legislator, he hath conveyed the fruits of his death to all, that is, those fruits which it appertained to him as legislator, to convey, which is right to what his new law or covenant doth promise; but those mercies which he gives as *Dominus absolutus*, arbitrarily beside or above his engagement, he neither gives nor ever intended to give to all that he died for." (*Universal Redemption*, p. 425.)

The only quibble which prevents the real aspect of this scheme from being at first seen, is, that Baxter, and the divines of this school, give to the elect irresistible effectual grace; but contend, that others have *sufficient grace.* This kind of grace is called, aptly enough, by Baxter himself, "sufficient *ineffectual* grace;" and that it is worthy the appellation, his own account of it will show.

"I say it again, confidently, all men that perish (who have the use of reason) do perish directly, for rejecting sufficient recovering grace. By grace, I mean mercy contrary to merit: by recovering, I mean such as TENDETH in its own nature toward their recovery, and leadeth or helpeth them thereto. By sufficient, I mean, NOT SUFFICIENT DIRECTLY TO SAVE THEM; (for such none of the elect have till they are saved;) NOR YET SUFFICIENT TO GIVE THEM FAITH OR CAUSE THEM SAVINGLY TO BELIEVE. But it is sufficient to bring them NEARER

Christ than they are, though not to put them into immediate possession of Christ by union with him, as faith would do. It is an easy truth, that all men naturally are far from Christ, and that some, by custom in sinning, for want of informing and restraining means, are much farther from him than others, (as the heathens are,) and that it is not God's usual way (nor to be expected) to bring these men to Christ at once, by one act, or without any preparation, or first bringing them nearer to him. It is a similitude used by some that oppose what I now say: suppose a man in a lower room should go no more steps than he in the middle room, he must go many steps before he came to be as near you as the other is. Now, suppose you offer to take them by the hand when they come to the upper stairs, and give them some other sufficient help to come up the lower steps: if these men will not use the help given them to ascend the first steps, (though entreated,) who can be blamed but themselves if they came not to the top? It is not your fault but theirs, that they have not your hand to lift them up at the last step. So is our present case. Worldlings, and sensual ignorant sinners, have many steps to ascend before they come to justifying faith; and heathens have many steps before they come as far as ungodly Christians, (as might easily be manifested by enumeration of several necessary particulars.) Now, if these will not use that sufficient help that Christ gives them to come the first, or second, or third step, whose fault is it that they have not faith?" (*Universal Redemption*, p. 434.)

But we have no reason to conclude, from this system, that if they took the steps required, it would bring them "nearer to Christ than they are," or, at least, bring them up to SAVING FAITH, which is the great point, since Mr. Baxter's own doctrine is, that Christ "never properly intended or purposed the actual justifying, and saving of all, and did not, therefore, die for all, nor for any that perish, *with a design or resolution to save them*, much less did he die for all, *as to this intent*." Those, then, for whom Christ died, not with *intent* to give saving faith, cannot be saved; yet we are told that to these sufficient grace is given, to take a step or two which would bring them "nearer to Christ." Suppose such persons, then, to take these steps, yet, as Christ died not for them, with *intent* to give them saving faith, without this intent they cannot have saving faith, since it is not a part of Christ's *purchase*, but his arbitrary *gift*. The truth then is, that their salvation is as impossible as that of the reprobates under the supralapsarian scheme, and the reason of their doom is no act of their own, but an act of Christ himself, who, as "absolute Lord," denies that to them which is necessary to their salvation.

It is, however, but fair that Mr. Baxter should himself answer this objection.

"*Objection*.—Then, they that come not the first step are excusable;

for, if they had come to the step next believing, they had no assurance that Christ would have given them faith.

"*Answer.*—No such matter: for though they had no assurance, they had both God's command to seek more grace, and sufficient encouragement thereto; they had such as Mr. Cotton calls HALF PROMISES, that is, a discovery of a possibility, and high degree of PROBABILITY of obtaining; as *Peter* to *Simon*, pray, if *perhaps* the thoughts of thy heart may be forgiven. They may think God will not appoint men vain means, and he hath appointed some means to all men to get more grace, and bring them nearer Christ than they are. Yea, no man can name that man since the world was made, that did his best in the use of these means, and lost his labour. So that if all men have not faith it is their own fault; not only as originally sinners, but as rejecting sufficient grace to have brought them nearer Christ than they were; for which it is that they justly perish, as is more fully opened in the dispute of sufficient grace."

One argument from Scripture demolishes this whole scheme. Mr. Baxter makes the condemnation of men to rest upon their not coming "*nearer* to Christ" than they are in their natural state; but the Scripture places their guilt in not *fully* "coming to him;" or, in other words, in their not believing in Christ "to salvation," since it has made faith their duty, and has connected salvation with faith. That they must take previous steps, such as consideration and repentance, is true, and that they are guilty for not taking them; but then their guilt arises from their rejection of a strength and grace to consider and repent which is imparted to them, *in order to lead them, through this process, to saving faith itself*; and they are condemned for not having this faith, because not only the preparatory steps, but *the faith itself* is put within their reach, or they could not be condemned for *unbelief*. If Baxter really meant that any steps these non-elect persons could take, would actually put them into possession of saving faith, he would have said so in so many plain words, and then between him and the Arminians there would have been no difference, so far as they who perish are concerned. But coming nearer to Christ, and nearer to saving faith are with him quite distinct. His concern was not to show how the non-elect might be saved, but how they might with some plausibility be damned.

"What then," says Dr. Womack, "is the universal redemption you or they speak of? Doth it consist in the *oblation* of the curse or pain, the *impetration* of grace and righteousness, and the *collation* of life and glory? Man's *misery* consists but of *two* parts, *sin* and *punishment*. Doth your *universal* redemption make sufficient provision to *free* the non-elect from *both*, or from *either* of these? From the *wrath* to come, the *damnation* of hell, or from *iniquity* and their *vain conversation*? In-

deed, in your assize sermons, you did very seasonably preach up Christ to be a *Lord Chief Justice* to judge the reprobate; but I cannot find that ever you declare *him* to be their Lord *Keeper*, or their Lord *Treasurer*, to communicate his *saving* grace for their conversion, or to secure them against the *assaults* and rage of their ghostly enemy. These last offices you suppose him to bear in favour of the elect only, so that your *universal* redemption holds a very fair correspondence with your *sufficient* grace, (as to the non-elect,)—there is not *one* single person sanctified by *this*, or saved by *that*." (*Calvinistic Cabinet Unlocked.*)

The remark of Curcellæus on the same system, as delivered by Amyraldus, is conclusive.

"Beside, since faith is necessary, in order to make us partakers of the benefits which are procured by the death of Christ, and since no one can obtain it by his natural powers, (for it is imparted through a special gift, from which God, by an absolute decree, has excluded the greatest portion of mankind,) of what avail is it that Christ has died for *those to whom faith is denied?* Does not the affair revert to the same point, as if *he had never entertained an intention of redeeming them?*" (*De Jure Dei Creaturas, &c.*)

This cannot consistently be denied. Mr. Baxter, indeed, says, that "none can name the man since the world was made, that did his best in the use of the means to obtain more grace, and lost his labour." So we believe, but this helps not Mr. Baxter. One of his main principles is, that there is a class of men to whom Christ has resolved to give saving faith; to the rest he has resolved not to give it. The man, then, who seeks more than common grace, and obtains saving grace, is either in the class to whom Christ has resolved, by right of dominion, to give saving grace, or he is not. If the former, then he is one of the elect, and so the instance given proves nothing as to the case of the non-elect; but, if he be of the latter class, then one of those to whom Christ never resolved to give saving grace, by some means obtains it,—how, it will be difficult to say. In fact, it was never allowed by Mr. Baxter, or his followers, that any but the elect would be saved.

The remarks of a Calvinist upon the "middle scheme" of the French divines, the same in substance as that which was afterward advocated by Baxter, may properly close our remarks.

"This mitigated view of the doctrine of predestination has *only one defect;* but it is a *capital one.* It represents God as *desiring* a thing (that is, salvation and happiness) for ALL, which, in order to its attainment, requires a degree of his assistance and succour, which he refuseth to MANY. This rendered grace and redemption UNIVERSAL only in *words*, but PARTIAL in *reality;* and, therefore, did not at all mend the matter. The supralapsarians were consistent with themselves; but their doctrine was harsh and terrible, and was founded on the most un-

worthy notions of the Supreme Being; and, on the other hand, the system of Amyraut was full of inconsistencies: nay, even the sublapsarian doctrine has its difficulties, and rather palliates than removes the horrors of supralapsarianism. What, then, is to be done? From what quarter shall the candid and well-disposed Christian receive that solid satisfaction and wise direction which neither of these systems is adapted to administer? These he will receive by turning his dazzled and feeble eye from the secret decrees of God, which were neither designed to be rules of action, nor sources of comfort to mortals here below; and, by fixing his view upon the mercy of God, as it is manifested through Christ, the pure laws and sublime promises of his Gospel, and the equity of his present government and future tribunal." (*Maclaine's Notes on Mosheim's History.*)

The theory, to which the name of Baxter has given some weight in this country, has been introduced more at length, because with it stands or falls every system of moderated or modified Calvinism, which by more modern writers has been advocated. The scheme of Dr. Williams, of Rotherham, is little beside the old theory of supralapsarian reprobation, in its twofold enunciation of PRETERITION, by which God refuses help to a creature which cannot stand without help, and his consequent DAMNATION for the crimes committed in consequence of this withholding of supernatural aid. The dress is altered, and the system has a *dash* of Cameronism, but it is in substance the same. All other mitigated schemes rest on two principles, the sufficiency of the atonement for all mankind, and the sufficiency of grace to those who believe not. For the first, it is enough to say, that the synod of Dort and the higher Calvinistic school will agree with them upon this point, and so nothing is gained; for the second, that the sufficiency of grace in these schemes is always understood in Baxter's sense, and is mere verbiage. It is not "the grace of God WHICH BRINGETH SALVATION;" for no man is actually saved without something more than this "sufficient grace" provides. That which is contended for, is, in fact, not a sufficiency of grace in order to salvation; but, in order to justify the condemnation which inevitably follows. For this alone the struggle is made, but without success. The main characteristic of all these theories, from the first to the last, from the highest to the lowest is, that a part of mankind are shut out from the mercies of God, on some ground irrespective of their refusal of a sincere offer to them of salvation through Christ, made with a communicated power of embracing it. Some power they allow to the reprobate, as natural power, and degrees of superadded moral power; but in no case the power to believe unto salvation; and thus, as one well observes, "when they have cut some fair trenches, as if they would bring the water of life unto the dwellings of the reprobate, on a sudden they open a sluice which carries it off again." The whole labour of

these theories is to find out some decent pretext for the infliction of punishment on them that perish, independent of the only reason given by Scripture, their rejection of a mercy free for all.

Having exhibited the Calvinistic system on its own authorities, it may be naturally asked from what mode or bias of thinking a scheme could arise so much at variance with the Scriptures, and with all received notions of just and benevolent administration among men; properties of government which must be found more perfectly in the government of God, by reason of the perfection of its author, than m any other. That it had its source in a course of induction from the sacred Scriptures, though erroneous, is not probable; for, if it had been left to that test, it is pretty certain it would not have maintained itself. It appears rather to have arisen from metaphysical hypotheses and school subtilties, to which the sense of Scripture has been accommodated, often very violently; and by subtilties of this kind, it has, at all times, been chiefly supported.

It has, for instance, been assumed by the advocates of this theological theory, that all things which come to pass have been fixed by ETERNAL DECREES; and that as many men actually perish, it must, therefore, have been decreed that they should perish: and, consistently with such a scheme, it became necessary to exclude a part of the human race from all share in the benefits of Christ's redemption. The argument employed to confirm the premises is, "that it is agreeable to reason and to the analogy of nature, that God should conduct all things according to a deliberate and fixed plan, independent of his creatures, rather than that he should be influenced, even in his purposes, by the foresight of their capricious conduct." (Dr. RANKIN's *Institutes.*) "It is not easy to reconcile the immutability and efficacy of the Divine counsel which enters into our conceptions of the first cause, with a purpose to save all, suspended upon a condition which is not fulfilled with regard to many." (Dr. HILL's *Lectures.*) This has, indeed, all along been the main stress of the argument for absolute decrees, that a conditional decree reflects dishonour upon the Divine attributes, "by leaving God, as it were, in suspense, and waiting to see what men will do, before he passes a firm and irrevocable decree;" which, as they say, seems to imply want of power and prescience in God, and to be inconsistent with other of his Divine perfections. They especially think, that this is irreconcilable with the immutability of God, and that to subject his decrees to the changes of a countless number of mutable beings, must render him the most mutable being in the universe.

The whole of this objection, however, seems to involve a *petitio principii* It is taken for granted, either that the decrees of God are absolute appointments from eternity, and then any change of his decrees, dependent upon the acts of creatures, would be a contradiction; or else, hat the acts of creatures being free, it follows, that God had from eter-

sity no plan, and conducts his own government only as circumstances may arise. But, that either the decrees of God are fixed and absolute, or, that God can have no plan of government if that be denied, is the very alternative to be proved, the matter which is in debate. It becomes necessary, therefore, in order to ascertain the truth, to fix the sense of the favourite term "decrees," and for this we have no sound guide but the Holy Scriptures, which, as to what relates to man's salvation at least, contain the only exposition of the purposes of God.

The term "decree" is nowhere in Scripture used in the sense in which it is taken in the theology of the Calvinists. It is properly a legislative or judicial term, importing the solemn decision of a court, and was adopted into that system, probably, because of the absolute meaning it conveys, which quality of absoluteness is, in fact, the point debated. The "*purpose*" and "*counsel*" of God are the Scriptural terms applicable to this subject; one of which, "*counsel*," expresses an act of wisdom, and the other necessarily implies it, as it is the "*purpose*," design, or determination of a Being of infinite perfection, who can purpose, design, will, and determine nothing but under the direction of his intelligence, and the regulation of his moral attributes.

Terms are not indeed to be objected to merely because they are not found in the word of God; but their signification must be controlled by it, otherwise, as in the case of the term decrees, a meaning is often silently brought in under covert of the term, which becomes a postulate in argument: a practice which has been a fruitful source of misapprehension and error. The decrees of God, if the phrase then must be continued, can only Scripturally signify the determinations of his will in his government of the world he has made; and those determinations are plainly, in Scripture, referred to two classes, what he has himself *determined to do*, and what he has *determined to permit* to be done by free and accountable creatures. He determined, for instance, to create man, and he determined to permit his fall; he determined also the only method of dispensing pardon to the guilty, but he determined to permit men to reject it, and to fall into the punishment of their offences. Calvin, indeed, rejects the doctrine of permission. "It is not probable," he says, "that man procured his own destruction by the mere *permission*, and without any *appointment* of God." He had reason for this; for to have allowed this distinction would have been contrary to the main principles of his theological system, which are, that "the will of God is the *necessity* of things," and that all things are previously fixed by an absolute decree; so that they must happen. The consequence is, that he and his followers involve themselves in the tremendous consequence of making God the author of sin; which, after all their disavowals, and we grant them sincere, will still logically cleave to them: for it is obvious, that by nothing can we fairly avoid this consequence but by allowing

the distinction between determinations TO DO, on the part of GOD, and determinations TO PERMIT certain things to be done by others. The principle laid down by Calvin is destructive of all human agency, seeing it converts man into a mere *instrument;* while the other maintains his *agency* in its proper sense, and, therefore, his proper accountability. On Calvin's principle, man is no more an agent than the knife in the hand of the assassin; and he is not more responsible, therefore, in equity, to punishment, than the knife by which the assassination is committed, with it capable of being punished. For if man has not a real agency, that is, if there is a necessity above him so controlling his actions as to render it impossible that they should have been otherwise, he is in the hands of another, and not master of himself, and so his actions cease to be his own.

A decree to permit involves no such consequences. This is indeed acknowledged; but then, on the other hand, it is urged that this imposes an uncertainty upon the Divine plans, and makes him dependent upon the acts of the creature. In neither of these allegations is there any weight; for as to the first, there can be no uncertainty in the principles of the administration of a Being who regulates the whole by the immutable rules of righteousness, holiness truth, and goodness; so that all the acts of the creature do but call forth some new illustration of his unchangeable regard to these principles. Nor can any act of a creature render his plans uncertain by coming upon him by surprise, and thus oblige him to alter his intentions on the spur of the moment. What the creature will do, in fact, is known beforehand with a perfect prescience, which yet, as we have already proved, (Part ii, c. 4,) interferes not with the liberty of our actions; and what God has determined to do in consequence, is made apparent by what he actually does, which with him can be no new, no sudden thought, but known and purposed from eternity, in the view of the actual circumstances. As to the second objection, that this makes his conduct dependent upon the acts of the creature, so far from denying it we may affirm it to be one of the plainest doctrines of the word of GOD. He punishes or blesses men according to their conduct; and he waits until the acts of their sin or their obedience take place, before he either punishes or rewards. The dealings of a sovereign judge must, in the nature of things themselves, be dependent upon the conduct of the subjects over whom he rules: they must vary according to that conduct; and it is only in the principles of a righteous government that we ought to look, for that kind of immutability which has any thing in it of moral character. Still it is said, that though the acts of God, as a sovereign, change, and are, apparently, dependent upon the conduct of creatures, yet that he, from all eternity, decreed, or determined to do them: as for instance, to exalt one nation and to abase another; to favour this individual, or to punish that; to

save this man, to destroy the other. This may be granted; but only in this sense, that his eternal determination or decree was as dependent and consequent upon his prescience of the acts which, according to the immutable principles of his nature and government, are pleasing or hateful to him, as the actual administration of favour or punishment is upon the actual conduct of men in time. This brings on the question of decrees *absolute* or *conditional;* and we are, happily, not left to the reasonings of men on this point; but have the light of the word of God, which abounds with examples of *decrees*, to which *conditions* are annexed, on the performance or neglect of which, by his creatures, their execution is made dependent. "If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? but if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door." If this was God's eternal decree concerning Cain, then it was plainly conditional from eternity; for his decrees in time cannot contradict his decrees from eternity, as to the same persons and events. But Cain did "not well;" was it not, then, says a Calvinist, eternally and absolutely decreed that he should not "do well?" The reply is, NO; because this supposed absolute decree of the Calvinist would contradict the revealed decree or determination of God, to put both the doing well and the doing ill into Cain's own power, which is utterly inconsistent with an absolute decree that he should have it in his power only to do ill; and the inevitable conclusion, therefore, is, that the only eternal decree, or Divine determination concerning Cain in this matter was, that he should be conditionally accepted, or conditionally left to the punishment of his sins. To this class of conditional decrees belong also all such passages, as, "If ye be willing and obedient ye shall eat the good of the land; but if ye refuse and rebel ye shall be devoured by the sword." "If ye live after the flesh ye shall die; but if ye, through the Spirit, do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." "He that believeth shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned." This last, especially, is God's decree or determination, as to all who hear the Gospel, to the end of time. It professes to be so on the very face of it, for its general and unrestricted nature cannot be denied; but if we are told, that there is a decree affecting numbers of men as individuals, by which God determined absolutely to pass them by, and to deny to them the grace of faith, such an allegation cannot be true; because it contradicts the decree as revealed by God himself. His decree gives to all who hear the news of Christ's salvation, the alternative of believing and being saved, of not believing and being damned; but there is no alternative in the absolute decree of Calvinism: as to the reprobate, no one can believe and be saved who is under such decree: God never intended he should; and, therefore, he is put by one decree in one condition, and by another decree in an entirely opposite condition, which is an obvious contradiction.

But we have instances of the revocation of GOD's decrees, as well as

of their conditional character, one of which will be sufficient for illustration. In the case of Eli, "I said indeed that thy house and the house of thy father should walk before me for ever; but now the Lord saith, be it far from me; for them that honour me I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed." No passage can more strongly refute the Calvinistic notion of God's immutability, which they seem to place in his never changing his *purpose*, whereas, in fact, the Scriptural doctrine is, that it consists in his never changing the *principles* of his administration. One of those principles is laid down in this passage. It is, "them that honour me I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed." To this principle God is immutably true; but it was his unchangeable regard to that very principle which brought on the change of his conduct toward the house of Eli, and induced him to revoke his former promise. This is the only immutability worthy of God, or which can be reconciled to the facts of his government. For either the advocate of absolute predestination must say that the promises and threatenings are declarations of his will and purposes, or they are not. If they are not, they contradict his truth; but if the point, that they do in fact declare his will is conceded, that will is either absolute or conditional. Let us then try the case of Eli by this alternative. If the promise of continuing the priesthood in the family of Eli were absolute, then it could not be revoked. If the threatening expressed an absolute and eternal will and determination to divert the priesthood from Eli's progeny, then the promise was a mockery; and God is in this, and all similar instances, made to engage himself to do what is contrary to his absolute intention and determination: in other words, he makes no engagement in fact, while he seems to do it in form, which involves a charge against the Divine Being which few Calvinists would be bold enough to maintain. But if these declarations to Eli be regarded as the expressions of a determination always taken, in the mind of God, under the conditions implied in the fixed principles of his government, then the language and the acts of God harmonize with his sincerity and faithfulness, and, instead of throwing a shade over his moral attributes, illustrate his immutable regard to those wise, equitable, and holy rules by which he conducts his government of moral agents. Nor will the distinction which some Calvinists have endeavoured to establish between the promises and threatenings of God and his decrees, serve them; for where is it to be found except in their own imagination? We have no intimation of such a distinction in Scripture, which, nevertheless, professes to reveal the eternal "*purpose*" and "*counsel*" of God on those matters to which his promises and threatenings relate,—the salvation or destruction of men. That counsel and purpose has, also, no manifestation in his word, but by promises and threatenings; these make up its whole substance, and, therefore, in order to make their distinction good,

hose who hold it must discover a distinction not only between God's romises and threatenings and his decrees; but between the eternal "counsels and purposes" of God and his decrees, which they acknowledge to be identical.

The fallacy which seems to mislead them appears to be the following: They allege that of two consequences, say the obedience or disobedience of Eli's house, we acknowledge, on both sides, that one will happen. That which actually happens we also see taken up into the course of the Divine administration, and made a part of his subsequent plan of government, as the transfer of the priesthood from the house of Eli: they, therefore, argue that the Divine Being, having his plan before him, and this very circumstance entering into it, it was fixed from eternity as a part of that general scheme by which the purposes of God were to be accomplished, and which would have been uncertain and unarranged but for this preordination. The answer to this is,

1. That the circumstance of an event being taken up into the Divine administration, and being made use of to work out God's purposes, is no proof that he willed and decreed it. He could not will the wickedness of Eli's sons, and could not, therefore, ordain and appoint it, or his decrees would be contrary to his will. The making use of the result of the choice of a free agent, only proves that it was foreseen, and that there are, so to speak, infinite resources in the Divine mind to turn the actions of men into the accomplishment of his plans, without either willing them when they are evil, or imposing fetters upon their freedom.

2. That though an event be interwoven with the course of the Divine government, it does not follow that it was necessary to it. The ends of a course of administration might have been otherwise accomplished; as, in the case before us, if Eli's house had remained faithful, and the family of Zadok had not been chosen in its stead. The general plan of God's government does not, therefore, necessarily include every event which happens as a necessary part of its accomplishment, since the same results might, in many cases, have been brought out of other events; and, therefore, it cannot be conclusively argued, that as God wills the accomplishment of the general plan, he must will in the same manner the particular events which he may overrule to contribute to it. But,

3. As to the general plan, it is also an unfounded assumption, that it was the subject of an absolute determination. From this has arisen the notion that the fall of Adam was willed and decreed by God. To this doctrine, which, for the sake of a metaphysical speculation, draws after it so many abhorrent and antiscriptural consequences, we must demur. God could not will that event actively without willing sin: he could not absolutely decree it without removing all responsibility, and, therefore, all fault from the first offender. If God be holy, he could not will Adam's offence, though he might determine not to prevent it by inter

fering with man's freedom, which is a very different case; and if in guarding his law from violation by a severe sanction, he proceeded with sincerity, he could not *appoint* its violation. We may confidently say, that he willed the contrary of Adam's offence; and that he used all means consistent with his determination to give and maintain free agency to his creatures, to secure the accomplishment of that will. It was against his will, therefore, that our progenitors sinned and fell; and his "purpose" and "counsel," or his *decree*, if the term please better, to govern the world according to the principles and mode now in operation, was *dependent* upon an event which he willed not; but which, as being foreseen, was the plan he in wisdom, justice, and mercy, adopted in the view of this contingency. And suppose we were to acknowledge with some, that the result will be more glorious to him, and more beneficial to the universe, through the wisdom with which he overrules all things, than if Adam and his descendants had stood in their innocency, it will not follow, even from this, that the present was that order of events which God absolutely ordered and decreed. We are told, indeed, that if this was the best of possible plans, God was, by the perfection of his nature, bound to choose it; and that if he chose it, his will, in this respect, made all the rest necessary. But, to say nothing of the presumption of determining what God was bound to do in any hypothetic case, the position that God must choose the best of possible plans is to be taken with qualification. We can neither prove that the state of things which shall actually issue is the best among those possible; nor that among possible systems there can be a *best*, since they are all composed of created things, and no system can actually exist, to which the Creator, who is infinite in power, could not add something. Were no sin involved in the case it would be clearer; but it is not only unsupported by any declaration of Scripture, but certainly contrary to many of its principles, to assume that God originally, so to speak, and, in the first instance, willed and decreed a state of things which should *necessarily* include the introduction of moral evil into his creation, in order to manifest his glory, and work out future good to the creature; because we know that sin is that "abominable thing" which he hateth. A monarch is surely not bound secretly to appoint and *decree* the circumstances which must necessarily lead to a rebellion, in order that his clemency may be more fully manifested in pardoning the rebels, or the strength of his government displayed in their subjugation; although his subjects, upon the whole, might derive some higher benefit. We may, therefore, conclude that God willed with perfect truth and sincerity that man should not fall, although he resolved not to prevent that fall by interfering with his freedom, which would have changed the whole character of his government toward rational creatures; and that his plan, or decree, to govern the world upon the principle of redemption and

mediation was no *absolute* ordination, but *conditional* upon man's offence; and was an "eternal purpose," only in the eternal foresight of the actual occurrence of the fall of man, which yet, it is no contradiction to say, was against his will.

So fallacious are all such notions as to God's fixed plans. Fixed they may be, without being absolutely decreed; because fixed, in reference to what takes place, even in opposition to his will and intention; and as to the argument drawn by Calvinists from the perfections of God, it is surely a more honourable view of him to suppose that his *will* and his promulgated *law* accord and consent, than that they are in opposition to each other; more honourable to him, that he is immutable in his adherence to the *principles*, rather than in the *acts* of government; more honourable to him, that he can make the conduct of his free creatures to work out either his original purposes, or purposes more glorious to himself and beneficial to the universe, than that he should frame plans so fixed as to have no reference to the free actions of creatures, whom, by a strange contradiction, he is represented as still holding accountable for their conduct; plans which all these creatures shall be necessitated to fulfil, so as to be capable of no other course of action whatever, or else that his government must become loose and uncertain. This is, indeed, to have low thoughts, even of the infinite wisdom of God; and either involves his justice and truth in deep obscurity, or presents them to us under very equivocal aspects. Which of these views is the most consonant with the Bible, may be safely left with the candid reader.

The PRESCIENCE OF GOD is also a subject by which Calvinists have endeavoured to give some plausibility to their system. The argument as popularly stated, has been, that, as the destruction or salvation of every individual is foreseen, it is, therefore, certain, and, as *certain*, it is *inevitable* and *necessary*. The answer to this is, that certainty and necessity are not at all connected in the nature of things, and are, in fact, two perfectly distinct predicaments. *Certainty* has no relation to an event at all as evitable or inevitable, free or compelled, contingent or necessary. It relates only to the issue itself, the act of any agent, not to the quality of the act or event with reference to the circumstances under which it is produced. A free action is as much an event as a necessitated one, and, therefore, is as truly an object of foresight, which foresight cannot change the nature of the action, or of the process through which it issues, because the simple knowledge of an action, whether present, past, or to come, has no influence upon it of any kind. *Certainty* is, in fact, no quality of an action at all; it exists, properly speaking, in the mind foreseeing, and not in the action foreseen; but freedom or constraint, contingency or necessity qualify the action itself, and determine its nature, and the rewardableness, or punitive demerit

of the agent. When, therefore, it is said, that what God foresees, will *certainly* happen, nothing more can be reasonably meant, than that HE is certain that it will happen; so that we must not transfer the certainty from God to the action itself, in the false sense of necessity, or, indeed, in any sense; for the certainty is in the Divine mind, and stands there opposed, not to the contingency of the action, but to doubtfulness as to his own prescience of the result. There is this certainty in the Divine mind as to the actions of men, that they *will* happen: but that they *must* happen cannot follow from this circumstance. If they must happen, they are under some control which prevents a different result; but the most certain knowledge has nothing in it which, from its nature, can control an action in any way, unless it should lead the being endowed with it, to adopt measures to influence the action, and then it becomes a question, not of foreknowledge, but of *power* and *influence*, which wholly changes the case. This is a sufficient reply to the popular manner of stating the argument. The scholastic method requires a little more illustration.

The knowledge of *possible* things, as existing from all eternity in the Divine understanding, has been termed "*scientia simplicis intelligentiæ*," or by the schoolmen, "*scientia indefinita*," as not determining the existence of any thing. The knowledge which God had of all real existences is termed "*scientia visionis*," and by the schoolmen, "*scientia definita*," because the existence of all objects of this knowledge is determinate and certain. To these distinctions another was added by those who rejected the predestinarian hypothesis, to which they gave the name "*scientia media*," as being supposed to stand in the middle between the two former. By this is understood, the knowledge, neither of things as possible, nor of events appointed and decreed by God; but of events which are to happen upon certain conditions. (3)

The third kind of knowledge, or *scientia media*, might very well be included in the second, since *scientia visionis* ought to include not what God will do, and what his creatures will do under his appointment, but what they will do by his permission as free agents, and what he will do, as a consequence of this, in his character of Governor and Lord. But since the predestinarians had confounded *scientia visionis* with a predestinating decree, the *scientia media* well expressed what they had left

(3) "Ordo autem hic ut recte intelligi possit, observandum est triplicem Dei scientiam tribui solere: unam *necessariam*, quæ omnem voluntatis liberæ actum naturæ ordine antecedit, quæ etiam *practica et simplicis intelligentiæ* dici potest, qua seipsum et alia omnia possibilia intelligit. Alteram *liberam*, quæ consequitur actum voluntatis liberæ, quæ etiam *visionis* dici potest; quâ Deus omnia, quæ facere et permittere decrevit ita distincte novit, uti ea fieri et permittere voluit. Tertiam *mediam*, qua sub conditione novit quid homines aut angeli facturi essent pro sua libertate, si cum his aut illis circumstantiis, in hoc vel in illo rerum ordine, constituerentur." (*Disputat. Episcopii.* part i, disp. v.)

cute unaccounted for, and which they had assumed did not really exist,—the actions of creatures endowed with free will, and the acts of Deity which from eternity were consequent upon them. If such actions do not take place, then men are not free; and if the rectoral acts of God are not consequent upon the actions of the creature in the *order* of the Divine intention, and the conduct of the creature is consequent upon the foreordained rectoral acts of God, then we reach a necessitating eternal decree, which, in fact, the predestinarian contends for: but it unfortunately brings after it consequences which no subtilties have ever been able to shake off,—that the only ACTOR in the universe is GOD himself; and that the only distinction among events is, that one class is brought to pass by GOD directly, and the other indirectly; not by the *agency*, but by the mere *instrumentality* of his creatures.

The manner in which absolute predestination is made identical with *scientia visionis*, will be best illustrated by an extract from the writings of a tolerably fair and temperate modern Calvinist. Speaking of the two distinctions, *scientia simplicis intelligentiæ* and *scientia visionis*, he says,—

"Those who consider all the objects of knowledge as comprehended under one or other of the kinds that have been explained, are naturally conducted to that enlarged conception of the extent of the Divine decree, from which the Calvinistic doctrine of predestination unavoidably follows. The Divine decree is the determination of the Divine will to produce the universe, that is, the whole series of beings and events that were then future. The parts of this series arise in succession; but all were, from eternity, present to the Divine mind; and no cause was, at any time, to operate, or no effect that was at any time to be produced in the universe, can be excluded from the original decree, without supposing that the decree was at first imperfect and afterward received accessions. The determination to produce this world, understanding by that word the whole combination of beings, and causes, and effects, that were to come into existence, arose out of the view of all possible worlds, and proceeded upon reasons to us unsearchable, by which this world that now exists appeared to the Divine wisdom the fittest to be produced. I say, the determination to produce this world proceeded upon reasons; because we must suppose, that in forming the decrees, a choice was exerted, that the Supreme Being was at liberty to resolve either that he would create or that he would not create; that he would give his work this form or that form, as he chose; otherwise we withdraw from the Supreme Intelligence, and subject all things to blind fatality. But if a choice was exerted in forming the decree, the choice must have proceeded upon reasons; for a choice made by a wise Being, without any ground of choice, is a contradiction in terms. At the same time it is to be remembered, that as nothing then existed but the Supreme Being, the only reason which could determine him in

choosing what he was to produce, was its appearing to him fitter for accomplishing the end which he proposed to himself than any thing else which he might have produced. Hence *scientia visionis* is called by theologians *scientia libera*. To *scientia simplicis intelligentiæ*, they gave the epithet *naturalis*, because the knowledge of all things possible arises necessarily from the nature of the Supreme mind; but to *scientia visionis* they gave the epithet *libera*, because the qualities and extent of its objects are determined, not by any necessity of nature, but by the will of the Deity. Although in forming the Divine decree there was a choice of this world, proceeding upon a representation of all possible worlds, it is not to be conceived, that there was any interval between the choice and representation, or any succession in the parts of the choice. In the Divine mind there was an intuitive view of that immense subject, which it is not only impossible for our minds to comprehend at once, but in travelling through the parts of which we are instantly bewildered; and one decree, embracing at once the end and means, ordained with perfect wisdom all that was to be.

"The condition of the human race entered into this decree. It is not, perhaps, the most important part of it when we speak of the formation of the universe, but it is a part which, even were it more insignificant than it is, could not be overlooked by the Almighty, whose attention extends to all his works, and which appears, by those dispensations of his providence that have been made known to us, to be interesting in his eyes. A decree respecting the condition of the human race includes the history of every individual: the time of his appearing upon the earth; the manner of his existence while he is an inhabitant of the earth, as it is diversified by the actions which he performs, and by the events, whether prosperous or calamitous, which befall him, and the manner of his existence after he leaves the earth, that is, future happiness or misery. A decree respecting the condition of the human race also includes the relations of the individuals to one another: it fixes their connections in society, which have a great influence upon their happiness and their improvement; and it must be conceived as extending to the important events recorded in Scripture, in which the whole species have a concern. Of this kind is the sin of our first parents, the consequence of that sin reaching to all their posterity, the mediation of Jesus Christ appointed by God as a remedy for these consequences, the final salvation, through his mediation, of one part of the descendants of Adam, and the final condemnation of another part, notwithstanding the remedy. These events arise at long intervals of time, by a gradual preparation of circumstances, and the operation of various means. But by the Creator, to whose mind the end and means were at once present, these events were beheld in intimate connection with one another, and in conjunction with many other events to us unknown, and conse-

quently all of them, however far removed from one another as to the time of their actual existence, were comprehended in that one decree by which he determined to produce the world." (*Hill's Lectures*, vol. iii, page 38.)

Now some things in this statement may be granted; as for instance, that when the choice, speaking after the manner of men, was between creating the world and not creating it, it appeared fitter to God to create than not to create; and that all actual events were foreseen, and will take place, so far as they are future, as they are foreseen; but where is the connection between these points, and that absolute decree which in this passage is taken for either the same thing as foreseeing, or as necessarily involved in it? "The Divine decree," says Dr. Hill, "is the determination of the Divine will to *produce* the universe, that is, the *whole series of* BEINGS *and* EVENTS that were then future." If so, it follows, that it was the Divine will to *produce* the fall of man, as well as his creation; the offences which made redemption necessary, as the redemption itself: to produce the destruction of human beings, and their vices which are the means of that destruction; the salvation of another part of the race, and their faith and obedience, as the means of that salvation:—for by "one decree, embracing at once *the end* and *the means*, he ordained, with perfect wisdom, all that was to be." This is in the true character of the Calvinistic theology; it dogmatizes with absolute confidence on some metaphysical assumption, and forgets for the time, that any such book as the Bible, a revelation of God, by God himself, exists in the world. If the determination of the Divine will, with respect to the creation of man, were the same kind of determination as that which respected his fall, how then are we to account for the means taken by God to prevent the fall, which were no less than the communication of an upright and perfect nature to man, from which his ability to stand in his uprightness arose, and the threatening of the greatest calamity, death, in order to deter him from the act of offence? How, in that case, are we to account for the declarations of God's *hatred* to sin, and for his own express declaration that "he *willeth* not the death of him that dieth?" How, for the obstructions he has placed in the way of transgression, which would be obstructions to his own determinations, if they can be allowed to be obstructions at all? How, for the intercession of Christ? How, for his tears shed over Jerusalem? Finally, how, for the declaration that "he willeth all men to be saved," and for his invitations to all, and the promises made to all? Here the discrepancies between the metaphysical scheme and the written word are most strongly marked; are so totally irreconcilable to each other, as to leave us to choose between the speculations of man, as to the operations of the Divine mind, and the declared will of God himself. The fact is, that Scripture can only be interpreted by denying

that the determination of the Divine will is, as to "*beings* and *events*," the same kind of determination; and we are necessarily brought back again to the only distinction which is compatible with the written word, a determination in God to do, and a determination to permit. For if we admit that the decree to effect or produce is absolute, both "as to the end and means," then, beside the consequences which follow as above stated, and which so directly contradict the testimony of God himself, another equally revolting also arises, namely, that as the end decreed is, as we are told, most glorious to God, so the means, being controlled and directed to that end, are necessarily and directly connected with the glorification of God; and so men glorify God by their vices, because by them they fulfil his will, and work out his designs according to the appointment of his "wisdom." That this has been boldly contended for by leading Calvinistic divines in former times, and by some, though of a lower class, in the present day, is well known: and that they are consistent in their deductions from the above premises, is so obvious, that it is matter of surprise, that those Calvinists who are shocked at this conclusion should not either suspect the principles from which it so certainly flows, or that, admitting the doctrine, they should shun the explicit avowal of the inevitable consequence.

The sophistry of the above statement of the Calvinistic view of prescience and the decrees, as given by Dr. Hill, lies in this, that the determination of the Divine will to produce the universe is made to include a determination as absolute "to produce the whole series of beings and events that were then future;" and in assuming that this is involved in a perfect prescience of things, as actually to exist and take place. But among the "BEINGS" to be produced, were not only beings bound by their instincts, and by circumstances which they could not control, to act in some given manner; but also beings endowed with such freedom that they might act in different and opposite ways, as their own will might determine. Either this must be allowed or denied. If it is denied, then man is not a free agent, and, therefore, not accountable for his personal offences, if offences those acts can be called, to the doing of which there is "a determination of the Divine will," of the same nature as to the "producing of the universe" itself. This, however, is so destructive of the nature of virtue and vice; it so entirely subverts the *moral* government of God by merging it into his *natural* government; and it so manifestly contradicts the word of God, which, from the beginning to the end, supposes a power bestowed on man to avoid sin, and on this establishes his accountableness; that, with all these fatal consequences hanging upon it, we may leave this notion to its own fate. But if any such freedom be allowed to man, (either actually enjoyed or placed within his reach by the use of means which are within his power,) that he may both will and act differently, in any given case, from his

ultimate volitions and the acts resulting therefrom, then cannot that which he actually does, as a free agent, say some sinful act, have been "determined" in the same manner by the Divine will, as the "production" of the universe and the "beings" which compose it. For if man is a being free to sin or not to sin; and it was the "determination of the Divine will" to produce such a being; it was his determination to give to him this liberty of *not* doing that which actually he does; which is wholly contrary to a determination that he should act in one given manner, and in that alone. For here, on the one hand, it is alleged that the Divine will absolutely determines to produce certain "*events*," and yet on the other it is plain that he absolutely determined to produce "*beings*" who should, by his will and consequent endowment, have in themselves the power to produce contrary events; propositions which manifestly fight with each other, and cannot both be true. We must either, then, give up man's free agency and true accountability, or this absolute determination of events. The former cannot be renounced without involving the consequences above stated; and the abandoning of the latter brings us to the only conclusion which agrees with the word of God,—that the acts of free agents are not *determined*, but *foreseen* and *permitted*; and are thus taken up, not as *the acts of God*, but as *the acts of men*, into the Divine government. "Ye devised evil against me," says Joseph to his brethren, "but God meant it for good." Thus the principle which vitiates Dr. Hill's statement is detected. Grotius has much better observed, "When we say that God is the cause of all things, we mean of all such things as have a real existence; which is no reason why those things themselves should not be the cause of some accidents, such as actions are. God created men, and some other intelligences superior to man, with a liberty of acting; which liberty of acting is not in itself evil, but may be the cause of something that is evil; and to make God the author of evils of this kind, which are called moral evils, is the highest wickedness." (*Truth of the Christian Religion*, s. 8.)

Perhaps the notions which Calvinists form as to the will may be regarded as a consequence of the predestinarian branch of their system; but whether they are among the metaphysical sources of their error, or consequents upon it, they may here have a brief notice.

If the doctrine just refuted were allowed, namely, that all events are produced by the determination of the Divine will; and that the end and means are bound up in "one decree;" the predestinarian had sagacity enough to discern that the *volitions*, as well as the *acts* of men, must be placed equally under bondage, to make the scheme consistent; and, that whenever any moral action is the *end* proposed, the choice of the will, as the *means* to that end, must come under the same appointment and determination. It is, indeed not denied, that creatures may lose the

power to will that which is morally good. Such is the state of devils, and such would have been the state of man, had he been left wholly to the consequences of the fall. The inability is, however, not a natural, but a moral one; for volition, as a power of the mind, is not destroyed, but brought so completely under the dominion of a corrupt nature, as not to be *morally* capable of choosing any thing but evil. If man is not in this condition, it is owing, not to the remains of original goodness, as some suppose, but to that "grace of God" which is the result of the "free gift" bestowed upon all men; but that the power to choose that which is good, in some respects, and as a first step to the entire and exclusive choice of good in the highest degree, is in man's possession, must be certainly concluded from the calls so often made upon him in the word of God to change his conduct, and, in order to this, his will. "Hear, ye deaf, and see, ye blind," is the exhortation of a prophet, which, while it charges both spiritual deafness and blindness upon the Jews, supposes a power existing in them both of opening the eyes, and unstopping the ears. Such are all the exhortations to repentance and faith addressed to sinners, and the threatenings consequent upon continued impenitence and unbelief; which equally suppose a power of considering, willing, and acting, in all things adequate to the commencement of a religious course. From whatever source it may be derived, and no other can be assigned to it consistently with the Scriptures than the grace of God, this power must be experienced to the full extent of the call and the obligation to these duties. A power of choosing only to do evil, and of remaining impenitent, cannot be reconciled to such exhortations. This would but be a mockery of men, and a mere show of equitable government on the part of God, without any thing correspondent to this appearance of equity in point of fact. The Calvinistic doctrine, however, takes another course. As the sin and the destruction of the reprobate is determined by the decree, and their will is either left to its natural proneness to the choice of evil, or is, by coaction, impelled to it; so the salvation of the elect being absolutely decreed, the will, at the appointed time, comes under an irresistible impulse which carries it to the choice of good. Nor is this only an occasional influence, leaving men afterward, or by intervals, to freedom of choice, which might be allowed; but, in all cases, and at all times, the will, when directed to good, moves only under the unfrustrable impulses of grace. That man, therefore, has no choice, or at least no alternative in either case, is the doctrine assumed; and no other view can be consistently taken by those who admit the scheme of absolute predestination. To one class of objects is the will determined; no other being, in either case, possible; and thus one course of action, fulfilling the decree of God, is the only possible result, or the decree would not be absolute and fixed.

Some Calvinists have adopted all the consequences which follow this

view of the subject. They ascribe the actions and volitions of man to God, and regard sinful men as impelled to a necessity of sinning, in order to the infliction of that punishment which they think will glorify the sovereign wrath of him who made "the wicked" *intentionally* "for the day of evil." Enough has been said in refutation of this gross and blasphemous opinion, which, though it inevitably follows from absolute predestination, the more modest writers of the same school have endeavoured to hide under various guises, or to reconcile to some show of justice by various subtilties.

It has, for instance, been contended, that as in the case of transgressors, the evil acts done by them are the choice of their corrupt will, they are, therefore, done *willingly;* and that they are in consequence punishable although their will could not but choose them. This may be allowed to be true in the case of devils, supposing them at first to have voluntarily corrupted an innocent nature endowed with the power of maintaining its innocence, and that they were under no absolute decree determining them to this offence. For, though now their will is so much under the control of their bad passions, and is in itself so vicious, that it has no disposition at all to good, and from their nature, remaining in its present state, can have no such tendency; yet the original act, or series of acts, by which this state of their will and affections was induced, being their own, and the result of a deliberate choice between moral good and evil, both being in their own power, they are justly held to be culpable for all that follows, having had, originally, the power to avoid both the first sin and all others consequent upon it. The same may be said of sinful men, who have formed in themselves, by repeated acts of evil, at first easily avoided, various habits to which the will opposes a decreasing resistance in proportion as they acquire strength. Such persons, too, as are spoken of in the Epistle to the Hebrews, those whom "it is impossible to renew unto repentance," may be regarded as approaching very nearly to the state of apostate spirits, and being left without any of the aids of that Holy Spirit whom they have "quenched," cannot be supposed capable of willing good. Yet are they themselves justly chargeable with this state of their wills, and all the evils resulting from it. But the case of devils is widely different to that of men who, by their hereditary corruption, and the fall of human nature, to which they were not consenting parties, come into the world with this infirm, and, indeed, perverse state of the will, as to all good. It is not their personal fault that they are born with a will averse from good; and it cannot be their personal fault that they continue thus inclined only to evil if no assistance has been afforded, no gracious influence imparted, to counteract this fault of nature, and to set the will so far free, that it can choose either the good urged upon it by the authority and exciting motives of the Gospel, or, "making light" of that, to yield itself, in opposition to conviction, to the

evil to which it is by nature prone. It is not denied, that the will, in its purely natural state, and independent of all grace communicated to man through Christ, can incline only to evil; but the question is, whether it is so left; and whether, if this be contended for, the circumstance of a sinful act being the act of a will not able to determine otherwise, from whatever cause that may arise, whether from the influence of circumstances or from coaction, or from its own invincible depravity, renders him punishable who never had the means of preventing his will from lapsing into this diseased and vitiated state; who was born with this moral disease; and who, by an absolute decree, has been excluded from all share in the remedy? This is the only simple and correct way of viewing the subject; and it is quite independent of all metaphysical hypothesis as to the will. The argument is, that an act which has the consent of the will is punishable, although the will can only choose evil: we reply, that this is only true where the time of trial is past, as in devils and apostates; and then only, because these are personally guilty of having so vitiated their wills as to render them incapable of good. But the case of men who have fallen by the fault of another, and who are still in a state of trial, is one totally different. The sentence is passed upon devils, and it is as good as passed upon such apostates as the apostle describes in the Epistle to the Hebrews; but the mass of mankind are still probationers, and are appointed to be judged according to their works, whether good or evil. We deny, then, first, that they are in any case, left without the power of willing good; and we deny it on the authority of Scripture. For, in no sense, can "life and death be set before us," in order that we may "choose life," if man is wholly derelict by the grace of God, and if he remains under his natural, and, but for the grace of God given to *all* mankind, his invincible inclination to evil. For if this be the natural state of mankind, and if to a part of them that remedial grace is denied, then is not "LIFE" set before them as an object of "choice;" and if to another part that grace is so given, that it irresistibly and constantly works so as to compel the will to choose predetermined and absolutely appointed acts, no "*death*" is set before them as an object of choice. If, therefore, according to the Scriptures, both life and death are set before men, then have they power to choose or refuse either, which is conclusive, on the one hand, against the doctrine of the total dereliction of the reprobate, and on the other, against the unfrustrable operation of grace upon the elect. So, also, when our Lord says, "I WOULD have gathered you as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and YE WOULD not," the notion that men who finally perish have no power of willing that which is good, is totally disproved. The blame is manifestly, and beyond all the arts of cavilling criticism, laid upon their not WILLING IN A CONTRARY MANNER, which would be false upon the Calvinistic hypothesis. "I would not, and ye COULD not," ought,

in that case, to have been the reading; since they are bound to one determination only, either by the external or internal influence of another, or by a natural and involuntary disease of the will, for which no remedy was ever provided.

Thus it is decided by the word of God itself, that men who perish might have "chosen life." It is confirmed, also, by natural reason; for it is most egregiously to trifle with the common sense of mankind to call that a righteous procedure in God which would by all men be condemned as a monstrous act of tyranny and oppression in a human judge, namely, to punish capitally, as for a personal offence, those who never could will or act otherwise, being impelled by an invincible and incurable natural impulse over which they never had any control.—Nor is the case at all amended by the quibble that they act willingly, that is, with consent of the will; for since the will is under a natural and irresistible power to incline only one way, obedience is full as much out of their power by this state of the will, which they did not bring upon themselves, as if they were restrained from all obedience to the law of God by an external and irresistible impulse always acting upon them.

The case thus kept upon the basis of plain Scripture, and the natural reason of mankind, stands, as we have said, clear of all metaphysical subtilties, and cannot be subjected to their determination; but as attempts have been made to establish the doctrine of necessity, from the actual phenomena of the human will, we may glance, also, at this philosophic attempt to give plausibility to the predestinarian hypothesis.

The philosophic doctrine is, that the will is swayed by motives; that motives arise from circumstances; that circumstances are ordered by a power above us, and beyond our control; and that, therefore, our volitions necessarily follow an order and chain of events appointed and decreed by infinite wisdom. President Edwards, in his well known work on the will, applied this philosophy in aid of Calvinism; and has been largely followed by the divines of that school. But who does not see that this attempt to find a refuge in the doctrine of philosophical necessity affords no shelter to the Calvinian system, when pressed either by Scripture or by arguments founded upon the acknowledged principles of justice? For what matters it, whether the will is obliged to one class of volitions by the immediate influence of God, or by the denial of his remedial influence, the doctrine of the elder Calvinists; or that it is obliged to a certain class of volitions by motives which are irresistible in their operation, which result from an arrangement of circumstances ordered by God, and which we cannot control? Take which theory you please you are involved in the same difficulties; for the result is, that men can neither will nor act other

wise than they do, being, in one case, inevitably disabled by an act of God, and in the other bound by a chain of events established by an almighty power. The advocates for this philosophic theory of the will must be content to take this conclusion, therefore, and reconcile it as they can with the Scriptures; but they have the same task as their elder brethren of the same faith, and have made it no easier by their philosophy.

It is in vain, too, that they refer us to our own consciousness in proof of this theory. Nothing is more directly contradicted by what passes in every man's mind; and if we may take the terms human language has used on these subjects, as an indication of the general feelings of mankind, it is contradicted by the experience of all ages and countries. For if the will is thus absolutely dependent upon motives, and motives arise out of uncontrollable circumstances, for men to praise or to blame each other is a manifest absurdity; and yet all languages abound in such terms. So, also, there can be no such thing as conscience, which, upon this scheme, is a popular delusion which a better philosophy might have dispelled. For why do I blame or commend myself in my inward thoughts, any more than I censure or praise others, if I am, as to my choice, but the passive creature of motives and predetermined circumstances?

But the sophistry is easily detected. The notion inculcated is, that motives influence the will just as an additional weight thrown into an even scale poises it and inclines the beam. This is the favourite metiphor of the necessitarians; yet, to make the comparison good, they ought to have first proved the will to be as passive as the balance, or, in other words, they should have annihilated the distinction between mind and matter. But this necessary connection between motive and volition may be denied. For what are motives, as rightly understood here? Not physical causes, as a weight thrown into a scale; but *reasons* of choice, *views* and *conceptions* of things in the mind, which, themselves, do not *work* the will, as a machine; but in consideration of which, *the mind itself* wills and determines. But if the mind itself were obliged to determine by the strongest motive, as the beam is to incline by the heaviest weight, it would be obliged to determine always by the best reason; for motive being but a reason of action considered in the mind, then the best reason, being in the nature of things the strongest, must always predominate. But this is, plainly, contrary to fact and experience. If it were not, all men would act reasonably, and none foolishly; or, at least, there would be no faults among them but those of the understanding, none of the heart and affections. The weakest reason, however, too generally succeeds when appetite and corrupt affection are present; that is to say, the weakest motive. For if this be not allowed, we must say, that under the influence of appetite the weakest reason always appears the strongest, which is also false, in

fact; for then there would be no sins committed against *judgment* and *conviction*, and that many of our sins are of this description, our consciences painfully convict us. That the mind wills and acts generally under the influence of motives, may, therefore, be granted; but that it is passive, and operated upon by them necessarily, is disproved by the fact of our often acting under the weakest reason or motive, which is the character of all sins against our judgment.

But were we even to admit that present reasons or motives operate irresistibly upon the will, the necessary connection between motive and volition would not be established; unless it could be proved that we have no power to displace one motive by another, nor to control those circumstances from which motives flow. Yet, who will say that a person may not shun evil company, and fly from many temptations? Either this must be allowed, or else it must be a link in the necessary chain of events fixed by a superior power, that we should seek and not fly evil company; and so the exhortations, "when sinners entice thee consent thou not," and "go not into the way of sinners," are very impertinent, and only prove that Solomon was no philosopher. But we are all conscious that we have the power to alter, and control, and avoid the force of motives. If not, why does a man resist the same temptation at one time, and yield to it at another, without any visible change of the circumstances? He can also both change his circumstances by shunning evil company; and fly the occasions of temptation; and control that motive at one time to which he yields at another, under similar circumstances. Nay, he sometimes resists a powerful temptation, which is the same thing as resisting a powerful motive, and yields at another to a feeble one, and is conscious that he does so: a sufficient proof that there is an irregularity and corruptness in the *self-determining*, active power of *the mind*, independent of motive. Still, farther, the motive or reason for an action may be a bad one, and yet be prevalent for want of the presence of a better reason or motive to lead to a contrary choice and act; but, in how many instances is this the true cause why a better reason or stronger motive is not present, that we have lived thoughtless and vain lives, little considering the good or evil of things? And if so, then the thoughtless might have been more thoughtful, and the ignorant might have acquired better knowledge, and thereby have placed themselves under the influence of stronger and better motives. Thus this theory does not accord with the facts of our own consciousness, but contradicts them. It is, also, refuted by every part of the moral history of man; and it may be, therefore, concluded that those speculations on the human will, to which the predestinarian theory has driven its advocates, are equally opposed to the words of Scripture, to the philosophy of mind, to our observation of what passes in others, and to our own convictions.

Our moral liberty manifestly consists in the united power of thinking and reasoning, and of choosing and acting upon such thinking and reasoning; so that the clearer our thought and conception is of what is fit and right, and the more constantly our choice is determined by it, the more nearly we rise to the highest acts and exercises of this liberty. The best beings have, therefore, the highest degree of moral liberty, since no motive to will or act wrong is any thing else but a violation of this established and original connection between right reason, choice, and conduct; and if any necessity bind the irrational motive upon the will, it is either the result of bad voluntary habit, for which we are accountable; or necessity of nature and circumstances, for which we are not accountable. In the former case the actually influencing motive is evitable, and the theory of the necessitarians is disproved: in the latter it is confirmed; but then man is neither responsible to his fellow man, nor to God.

Certain notions as to the DIVINE SOVEREIGNTY have also been resorted to by Calvinists, in order to render that scheme plausible which cuts off the greater part of the human race from the hope of salvation by the absolute decree of God.

That the sovereignty of God is a Scriptural doctrine no one can deny; but it does not follow that the notions which men please to form of it should be received as Scriptural; for religious errors consist not only in denying the doctrines of the word of God, but also in interpreting them fallaciously.

The Calvinistic view of God's sovereignty appears to be, his doing what he wills, only because he wills it. So Calvin himself has stated the case, as we have noticed above; but as this view is repugnant to all worthy notions of an infinitely wise Being, so it has no countenance in Scripture. The doctrine which we are there taught is, that God's sovereignty consists in his doing many things by virtue of his own supreme right and dominion; but that this right is under the direction of his "*counsel*" or "*wisdom*." The brightest act of sovereignty is that of creation, and one in which, if in any, mere will might seem to have the chief place; yet, even in this act, by which myriads of beings of diverse powers and capacities were produced, we are taught that all was done in "*wisdom*." Nor can it be said that the sovereignty of God in creation, is uncontrolled by either justice or goodness. If the final cause of creation had been the misery of all sentient creatures, and all its contrivances had tended to that end: if, for instance, every sight had been disgusting, every smell a stench, every sound a scream, and every necessary function of life had been performed with pain, we must necessarily have referred the creation of such a world to a malignant being; and if we are obliged to think it impossible that a good being could have employed his almighty power with the direct intention to inflict

misery, we then concede that his acts of sovereignty are, by the very perfection of his nature, under the direction of his *goodness*, as to all creatures potentially existing, or actually existing while still innocent. Nor can we think it borne out by Scripture, or by the reasonable notions of mankind, that the exercise of God's sovereignty in the creation of things is exempt from any respect to *justice*, a quality of the Divine nature, which is nothing but his essential rectitude in exercise. It is true, that as existence, under all circumstances in which to exist is better upon the whole than not to exist, leaves the creature no claim to have been otherwise than it is made; and that God has a sovereign right to make one being an archangel and another an insect; so that "the thing formed" may not say "to him that formed it, why hast thou made me thus?" it could deserve nothing before creation, its being not having commenced: all that it is, and has, (its existent state being better than non-existence,) is, therefore, a boon conferred; and, in matters of grace, no axiom can be more clear, than that he who gratuitously bestows has the right "to do what he will with his own." But every creature, having been formed without any consent of its own, if it be innocent of offence, either from the rectitude of its nature, or from a natural incapacity of offending, as not being a moral agent, appears to have a claim, in natural right, upon exemption from such pains and sufferings, as would render existence a worse condition than never to have been called out of nothing. For, as a benevolent being, which God is acknowledged to be, cannot make a creature with such an intention and contrivance, that, by its very constitution, it must necessarily be wholly miserable; and we see in this, that his sovereignty is regulated by his goodness as to the commencement of the existence of sentient creatures; so, from the moment they begin to be, the government of God over them commences, and sovereignty in *government* necessarily grounds itself upon the principles of equity and justice, and "the Judge of the whole earth" *must* and *will* "do right."

This is the manifest doctrine of Scripture; for, although Almighty God often gives "no account of his matters," nor, in some instances, admits us to know *how* he is both just and gracious in his administration, yet are we referred constantly to those general declarations of his own word, which assure us that he is so, that we may "walk by faith," and wait for that period, when, after the faith and patience of good men have been sufficiently tried, the manifestation of these facts shall take place to our comfort and to his glory. In many respects, so far as we are concerned, we see no other reason for his proceedings, than that he so wills to act. But the error into which our brethren often fall, is to conclude, from their want of information in such cases, that God acts merely because he wills so to act; that because he gives not those reasons for his conduct which we have no right to demand, he acts

without any reasons at all; and because we are not admitted to the secrets of his council chamber, that his government is perfectly arbitrary, and that the main spring of his leading dispensations is to make a show of power: a conclusion which implies a most unworthy notion of God, which he has himself contradicted in the most explicit manner. Even his most mysterious proceedings are called "judgments;" and he is said to work all things "according to the *counsel* of his own *will*," a collation of words, which sufficiently show that not blind will, but will subject to "*counsel*," is that SOVEREIGN WILL which governs the world.

"Whenever, therefore, God acts as a governor, as a rewarder, or punisher, he no longer acts as a mere sovereign, by his own sole will and pleasure, but as an impartial judge, guided in all things by invariable justice.

"Yet it is true, that in some cases, mercy rejoices over justice, although severity never does. God may reward more, but he will never punish more than strict justice requires. It may be allowed, that God acts as sovereign in convincing some souls of sin, arresting them in their mad career by his resistless power. It seems also, that, at the moment of our conversion, he acts irresistibly. There may likewise be many irresistible touches in the course of our Christian warfare; but still, as St. Paul might have been either obedient or 'disobedient to the heavenly vision,' so every individual may, after all that God has done, either improve his grace, or make it of none effect.

"Whatever, therefore, it has pleased God to do, of his sovereign pleasure, as Creator of heaven and earth; and whatever his mercy may do on particular occasions, over and above what justice requires, the general rule stands firm as the pillars of heaven. 'The Judge of all the earth will do right:' 'he will judge the world in righteousness,' and every man therein, according to the strictest justice. He will punish no man for doing any thing which he could not possibly avoid; neither for omitting any thing which he could not possibly do. Every punishment supposes the offender might have avoided the offence for which he is punished, otherwise to punish him would be palpably unjust, and inconsistent with the character of God our governor." (*Wesley's Works*, vol. vi, p. 136.)

The case of HEATHEN NATIONS has sometimes been referred to by Calvinists, as presenting equal difficulties to those urged against their scheme of election and reprobation. But the cases are not at all parallel, nor can they be made so, unless it could be proved that heathens, *as such*, are inevitably excluded from the kingdom of heaven; which is not, as some of them seem to suppose, a conceded point. Those, indeed, if there be any such, who, believing in the universal redemption of mankind, should allow this, would be most inconsistent with themselves, and give up many of those principles on which they successfull

contend against the doctrine of absolute reprobation; but the argument lies in small compass, and is to be determined by the word of God, and not by the speculations of men. The actual state of pagan nations is affectingly bad; but nothing can be deduced from what they are in fact against their salvability; for although there is no ground to hope for the salvation of great numbers of them, actual salvation is one thing, and possible salvation is another. Nor does it affect this question, if we see not *how* heathens may be saved; that is, by what means repentance, and faith, and righteousness, should be in any such degree wrought in them, as that they shall become acceptable to God. The dispensation of religion under which all those nations are to whom the Gospel has never been sent, continues to be the patriarchal dispensation. That men were saved under that in former times we know, and at what point, if any, a religion becomes so far corrupted, and truth so far extinct, as to leave no means of salvation to men, nothing to call forth a true faith *in principle*, and obedience to what remains known or knowable of the original law, no one has the right to determine, unless he can adduce some authority from Scripture. That authority is certainly not available to the conclusion, that, in point of fact, the means of salvation are utterly withdrawn from heathens. We may say that a murderous, adulterous, and idolatrous heathen will be shut out from the kingdom of heaven; we must say this, on the express exclusion of all such characters from future blessedness by the word of God; but it would be little to the purpose to say, that, as far as we know, all of them are wicked and idolatrous. As far as *we* know they may, but we do not know the whole case; and, were these charges universally true, yet the question is not what the heathen are, but what they have the means of becoming. We indeed know that all are not equally vicious, nay, that some virtuous heathens have been found in all ages; and some earnest and anxious inquirers after truth, dissatisfied with the notions prevalent in their own countries respectively; and what these few were, the rest might have been likewise. But, if we knew no such instances of superior virtue and eager desire of religious information among them, the true question, "what degree of truth is, after all, attainable by them?" would still remain a question which must be determined not so much by our knowledge of facts which may be very obscure; but such principles and general declarations as we find applicable to the case in the word of God.

If all knowledge of right and wrong, and all gracious influence of the Holy Spirit, and all objects of faith, have passed away from the heathen, through the fault of their ancestors "not liking to retain God in their knowledge," and without the present race having been parties to this wilful abandonment of truth, then they would appear no longer to be accountable creatures, being neither under *law* nor under *grace*; but,

as we find it a doctrine of Scripture that all men are responsible to God, and that the "whole world" will be judged at the last day, we are bound to admit the accountability of all, and with that, the remains of law and the existence of a merciful government toward the heathen on the part of God. With this the doctrine of St. Paul accords. No one can take stronger views of the actual danger and the corrupt state of the Gentiles than he; yet he affirms that the Divine law had not perished wholly from among them; that though they had received no revealed law, yet they had a law "written on their hearts;" meaning, no doubt, the traditionary law, the equity of which their consciences attested; and, farther, that though they had not the written law, yet, that "by nature," that is, "without an outward rule, though this, also, strictly speaking, is by preventing grace," (*Wesley's Notes, in loc.*) they were capable of doing all the things contained in the law. He affirms, too, that all such Gentiles as were thus obedient, should be "justified, in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men, by Jesus Christ, according to his Gospel." The possible obedience and the possible "justification" of heathens who have no written revelation, are points, therefore, distinctly affirmed by the apostle in his discourse in the second chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, and the whole matter of God's sovereignty, as to the heathen, is reduced, not to the leaving of any portion of our race without the means of salvation, and then punishing them for sins which they have no means of avoiding; but to the fact of his having given superior advantages to us, and inferior ones only to them; a proceeding which we see exemplified in the most enlightened of Christian nations every day; for neither every part of the same nation is equally favoured with the means of grace, nor are all the families living in the same town and neighbourhood equally circumstanced as to means of religious influence and improvement. The principle of this inequality is, however, far different from that on which Calvinistic reprobation is sustained; since it involves no inevitable exclusion of any individual from the kingdom of God, and because the general principle of God's administration in such cases is elsewhere laid down to be, the requiring of much where much is given, and the requiring of little where little is given:—a principle of the strictest equity.

An unguarded opinion as to the IRRESISTIBILITY OF GRACE, and the passiveness of man in conversion, has also been assumed, and made to give an air of plausibility to the predestinarian scheme. It is argued, if our salvation is of God and not of ourselves, then those only can be saved to whom God gives the grace of conversion; and the rest, not having this grace afforded them, are, by the inscrutable counsel of God, passed by, and reprobated.

This is an argument *à posteriori;* from the assumed passiveness of man in conversion to the election of a part only of mankind to life. The

argument *à priori* is from partial election to life to the doctrine of irresistible grace, as the means by which the Divine decree is carried into effect. The doctrine of such an election has already been refuted, and it will be easy to show that it derives no support from the assumption that grace must work irresistibly in man, in order that the honour of our salvation may be secured to God, which is the plausible dress in which the doctrine is generally presented.

It is allowed, and all Scriptural advocates of the universal redemption of mankind will join with the Calvinists in maintaining the doctrine, that every disposition and inclination to good which originally existed in the nature of man is lost by the fall; that all men, in their simply *natural* state, are "dead in trespasses and sins," and have neither the will nor the power to turn to God; and that no one is sufficient of himself to think or do any thing of a saving tendency. But, as all men are required to do those things which have a saving tendency, we contend, that the grace to do them has been bestowed upon all. Equally sacred is the doctrine to be held, that no person can repent or truly believe except under the influence of the Spirit of God; and that we have no ground of boasting in ourselves, but that all the glory of our salvation, commenced and consummated, is to be given to God alone, as the result of the freeness and riches of his grace.

It will also be freely allowed, that the visitations of the gracious influences of the Holy Spirit are vouchsafed in the first instance, and in numberless other subsequent cases, quite independent of our seeking them or desire for them; and that when our thoughts are thus turned to serious considerations, and various exciting and quickened feelings are produced within us, we are often wholly passive; and also, that men are sometimes suddenly and irresistibly awakened to a sense of their guilt and danger by the Spirit of God, either through the preaching of the word instrumentally, or through other means, and sometimes, even, independent of any external means at all; and are thus constrained to cry out, "What must I do to be saved?" All this is confirmed by plain verity of Holy Writ; and is, also, as certain a matter of experience as that the motions of the Holy Spirit do often silently intermingle themselves with our thoughts, reasonings, and consciences, and breathe their milder persuasions upon our affections.

From these premises the conclusions which legitimately flow, are in direct opposition to the Calvinistic hypothesis. They establish,

1. The justice of God in the condemnation of men, which their doctrine leaves under a dark and impenetrable cloud. More or less of these influences from on high visit the finally impenitent, so as to render their destruction their own act by resisting them. This is proved, from the "Spirit" having "strove" with those who were finally destroyed by the flood of Noah; from the case of the finally impenitent Jews and their

ancestors, who are charged with "always *resisting* the Holy Ghost;" from the case of the apostates mentioned in the Epistle to the Hebrews, who are said to have done "despite to the Spirit of grace;" and from the solemn warnings given to men in the New Testament, not to "grieve" and "quench" the Holy Spirit. If, therefore, it appears that the destruction of men is attributed to their resistance of those influences of the Holy Spirit, which, but for that resistance, would have been saving, according to the design of God in imparting them, then is the justice of God manifested in their punishment; and it follows, also, that his grace so works in men, as to be both sufficient to lead them into a state of salvation, and even actually to place them in this state, and yet so as to be capable of being finally and fatally frustrated.

2. These premises, also, secure the glory of our salvation to the grace of God; but not by implying the Calvinistic notion of the continued and uninterrupted irresistibility of the influence of grace and the passiveness of man, so as to deprive him of his agency; but by showing that his agency, even when rightly directed, is upheld and influenced by the superior power of God, and yet so as to be still his own. For, in the instance of the mightiest visitation we can produce from Scripture, that of St. Paul, we see where the irresistible influence terminated, and where his own agency recommenced. Under the impulse of the conviction struck into his mind, as well as under the dazzling brightness which fell upon his eyes, he was passive, and the effect produced for the time *necessarily* followed; but all the actions consequent upon this were the results of deliberation and personal choice. He submits to be taught in the doctrine of Christ; "he *confers* not with flesh and blood;" "he is not *disobedient* to the heavenly vision;" "he faints not" under the burdensome ministry he had received; and he "keeps his body under subjection, lest, after having preached to others, he should himself become a castaway." All these expressions, so descriptive of consideration and choice, show that the irresistible impulse was not permanent, and that he was subsequently left to improve it or not, though under a powerful but still a resistible motive operating upon him to remain faithful.

For the gentler emotions produced by the Spirit, these are, as the experience of all Christians testifies, the ordinary and general manner in which the Holy Spirit carries on his work in man; and, if all good desires, resolves, and aspirations, are from him, and not from our own nature, (and, if we are utterly fallen, from our own nature they cannot be,) then if any man is conscious of having ever checked good desires, and of having opposed his own convictions and better feelings, he has in himself abundant proof of the resistibility of grace, and of the superability of those good inclinations which the Spirit is pleased to impart. He is equally conscious of the power of complying with them, though

still in the strength of grace, which yet, while it works in him "to will and to do," neither wills nor acts *for him*, nor even by him, as a passive instrument. For if men were wholly and at all times passive under Divine influence; not merely in the *reception* of it, for all are, in that respect, passive; but in the actings of it to practical ends, then would there be nothing to mark the difference between the righteous and the wicked but an *act of God*, which is utterly irreconcilable to the Scriptures. They call the former "obedient," the latter "disobedient;" one "willing," the other "unwilling;" and promise or threaten accordingly. They attribute the destruction of the one to their refusal of the grace of God, and the salvation of the other, as the *instrumental* cause, to their acceptance of it; and to urge that that personal act by which we receive the grace of Christ, detracts from his glory as our Saviour by attributing our salvation to ourselves, is to speak as absurdly as if we should say that the act of obedience and faith required of the man who was commanded to stretch out his withered arm, detracted from the glory of Christ's healing virtue, by which, indeed, the power of complying with the command, and the condition of his being healed, was imparted.

It is by such reasonings, made plausible to many minds by an affectation of metaphysical depth and subtilty, or by pretensions of magnifying the sovereignty and grace of God (often, we doubt not, very sincere) that the theory of election and reprobation, as held by the followers of Calvin with some shades of difference, but in all substantially the same, has had currency given to it in the Church of Christ in these latter ages. How unsound and how contrary to the Scriptures they are, may appear from that brief refutation of them just given; but I repeat what was said above, that we are never to forget that this system has generally had interwoven with it many of the most vital points of Christianity. It is this which has kept it in existence; for otherwise it had never, probably, held itself up against the opposing evidence of so many plain scriptures, and that sense of the benevolence and equity of God, which his own revelations, as well as natural reason, has riveted in the convictions of mankind. In one respect the Calvinistic and the Socinian schemes have tacitly confessed the evidence of the word of God to be against them. The latter has shrunk from the letter and common sense interpretation of Scripture within the clouds raised by a licentious criticism; the other has chosen rather to find refuge in the mists of metaphysical theories. Nothing is, however, here meant by this juxtaposition of theories, so contrary to each other, but that both thus confess, that the *prima facie* evidence afforded by the word of God is not in their favour. If we intended more by thus naming on the same page systems so opposite, one of which, with all its faults, contains all that truth by which men may be saved, while the other excludes it, "we should offend against the generation of the children of God."

CHAPTER XXIX.

Redemption—Farther Benefits.

Having endeavoured to establish the doctrine of the universal redemption of the human race, the enumeration of the leading blessings which flow from it may now be resumed. We have already spoken of *justification, adoption, regeneration*, and *the witness of the Holy Spirit*, and we proceed to another as distinctly marked, and as graciously promised in the Holy Scriptures: this is the ENTIRE SANCTIFICATION, or the perfected HOLINESS of believers; and as this doctrine, in some of its respects, has been the subject of controversy, the Scriptural evidence of it must be appealed to and examined. Happily for us, a subject of so great importance is not involved in obscurity.

That a distinction exists between a regenerate state and a state of entire and perfect holiness will be generally allowed. Regeneration, we have seen, is concomitant with justification; but the apostles, in addressing the body of believers in the Churches to whom they wrote their epistles, set before them, both in the prayers they offer in their behalf, and in the exhortations they administer, a still higher degree of deliverance from sin, as well as a higher growth in Christian virtues. Two passages only need be quoted to prove this:—1 Thess. v, 23, "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly, and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." 2 Cor. vii, 1, "Having these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." In both these passages deliverance from sin is the subject spoken of; and the prayer in one instance, and the exhortation in the other, goes to the extent of the entire sanctification of "the soul" and "spirit," as well as of the "flesh" or "body," from all sin; by which can only be meant our complete deliverance from all spiritual pollution, all inward depravation of the heart, as well as that which, expressing itself outwardly by the indulgence of the senses, is called "filthiness of the flesh."

The attainableness of such a state is not so much a matter of debate among Christians as the *time* when we are authorized to expect it. For as it is an axiom of Christian doctrine, that "without holiness no man can see the Lord;" and is equally clear that if we would "be found of him in *peace*," we must be found "without *spot* and *blameless*;" and that the Church will be presented by Christ to the Father without "fault;" so it must be concluded, unless, on the one hand, we greatly pervert the sense of these passages, or, on the other, admit the doctrine of purgatory or some intermediate purifying institution, that the entire

sanctification of the soul, and its complete renewal in holiness, must take place in this world.

While this is generally acknowledged, however, among spiritual Christians, it has been warmly contended by many, that the final stroke which destroys our natural corruption, is only given at death; and that the soul, when separated from the body, and not before, is capable of that immaculate purity which these passages, doubtless, exhibit to our hope.

If this view can be refuted, then it must follow, unless a purgatory of some description be allowed after death, that the entire sanctification of believers, at any time previous to their dissolution, and in the full sense of these evangelic promises, is attainable.

To the opinion in question, then, there appear to be the following fatal objections:—

1. That we nowhere find the promises of entire sanctification restricted to the article of death, either expressly, or in fair inference from any passage of Holy Scripture.

2. That we nowhere find the circumstance of the soul's union with the body represented as a necessary obstacle to its entire sanctification.

The principal passage which has been urged in proof of this from the New Testament, is that part of the seventh chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, in which St. Paul, speaking in the first person of the bondage of the flesh, has been supposed to describe his state, as a believer in Christ. But whether he speaks of himself, or describes the state of others in a supposed case, given for the sake of more vivid representation in the first person, which is much more probable, he is clearly speaking of a person who had once sought justification by the works of the law, but who was then convinced, by the force of a spiritual apprehension of the extent of the requirements of that law, and by constant failures in his attempts to keep it perfectly, that he was in bondage to his corrupt nature, and could only be delivered from this thraldom by the interposition of another. For, not to urge that his strong expressions of being "carnal," "sold under sin," and doing always "the things which he would not," are utterly inconsistent with that moral state of believers in Christ which he describes in the next chapter; and, especially, that he there declares that such as are in Christ Jesus "walk *not* after the flesh, but after the Spirit;" the seventh chapter itself contains decisive evidence against the inference which the advocates of the necessary continuance of sin till death have drawn from it. The apostle declares the person whose case he describes, to be under the *law*, and not in a state of deliverance by Christ; and then he represents him not only as despairing of self deliverance, and as praying for the interposition of a sufficiently powerful deliverer, but as thanking God that the very deliverance for which he groans is appointed to be

administered to him by Jesus Christ. "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank GOD through Jesus Christ our Lord."

This is, also, so fully confirmed by what the apostle had said in the preceding chapter, where he unquestionably describes the moral state of true believers, that nothing is more surprising than that so perverted a comment upon the seventh chapter, as that to which we have adverted, should have been adopted or persevered in. "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid! How shall we, who are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection; knowing this, that OUR OLD MAN is crucified with him, THAT THE BODY OF SIN MIGHT BE DESTROYED, that henceforth we should not serve sin; for he that is dead IS FREED FROM SIN." So clearly does the apostle show that he who is BOUND to the "body of death," as mentioned in the seventh chapter, is not in the state of a believer; and that he who has a true faith in Christ, "is FREED from sin."

It is somewhat singular, that the divines of the Calvinistic school should be almost uniformly the zealous advocates of the doctrine of the continuance of indwelling sin till death; but it is but justice to say, that several of them have as zealously denied that the apostle, in the seventh chapter of the Romans, describes the state of one who is justified by faith in Christ, and very properly consider the case there spoken of as that of one struggling in LEGAL bondage, and brought to that point of self despair and of conviction of sin and helplessness which must always precede an entire trust in the merits of Christ's death, and the power of his salvation.

3. The doctrine before us is disproved by those passages of Scripture which connect our entire sanctification with subsequent habits and acts to be exhibited in the conduct of believers *before death*. So in the quotation from Rom. vi, just given,—"knowing this, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that *henceforth* we should not serve sin." So the exhortation in 2 Cor. vii, 1, also given above, refers to the present life, and not to the future hour of our dissolution; and in 1 Thess. v, 23, the apostle first prays for the entire sanctification of the Thessalonians, and then for their *preservation* in that hallowed state, "unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

4. It is disproved, also, by all those passages which require us to bring forth those graces and virtues which are usually called the fruits of the Spirit. That these are to be produced during our life, and to be

displayed in our spirit and conduct, cannot be doubted; and we may then ask whether they are required of us in perfection and maturity? If so, in this degree of maturity and perfection, they necessarily suppose the entire sanctification of the soul from the opposite and antagonist evils. Meekness in its perfection supposes the extinction of all sinful anger; perfect love to God, supposes that no affection remains contrary to it; and so of every other perfect internal virtue. The inquiry, then, is reduced to this, whether these graces, in such perfection as to exclude the opposite corruptions of the heart, are of possible attainment. If they are not, then we cannot love God with our whole hearts; then we must be sometimes sinfully angry; and how, in that case, are we to interpret that *perfectness* in these graces which God hath required of us, and promised to us in the Gospel? For if the *perfection* meant (and let it be observed that this is a *Scriptural* term, and must mean something) be so comparative as that we may be sometimes sinfully angry, and may sometimes divide our hearts between God and the creature, we may apply the same comparative sense of the term to good words and to good works, as well as to good affections. Thus when the apostle prays for the Hebrews, "Now the God of peace that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you *perfect* in every *good work*, to do his will," we must understand this perfection of evangelical good works so that it shall sometimes give place to opposite evil works, just as good affections must necessarily sometimes give place to the opposite bad affections. This view can scarcely be soberly entertained by any enlightened Christian; and it must, therefore, be concluded, that the standard of our attainable Christian perfection, as to the affections, is a love of God so perfect as to "rule the heart," and exclude all rivalry, and a meekness so perfect as to cast out all sinful anger, and prevent its return; and that as to good works, the rule is, that we shall be so "perfect in every good work," as to "do the will of God" habitually, fully, and constantly. If we fix the standard lower, we let in a license totally inconsistent with that Christian purity which is allowed by all to be attainable, and we make every man himself his own interpreter of that *comparative* perfection which is often contended for as that only which is attainable.

Some, it is true, admit the extent of the promises and the requirements of the Gospel as we have stated them; but they contend, that this is the mark at which we are to *aim*, the standard toward which we are to aspire, though neither is attainable fully till death. But this view cannot be true as applied to *sanctification*, or deliverance from all inward and outward sin. That the *degree* of every virtue implanted by grace is not limited, but advances and grows in the living Christian throughout life, may be granted; and through eternity also: but to say that these

virtues are not attainable, through the work of the Spirit, in that degree which shall destroy all opposite vice, is to say, that God, under the Gospel, requires us to be what we cannot be, either through want of efficacy in his grace, or from some defect in its administration; neither of which has any countenance from Scripture, nor is at all consistent with the terms in which the promises and exhortations of the Gospel are expressed. It is also contradicted by our own consciousness, which charges our criminal neglects and failures upon ourselves, and not upon the grace of God, as though it were insufficient. Either the consciences of good men have in all ages been delusive and over scrupulous; or this doctrine of the necessary, though occasional, dominion of sin over us is false.

5. The doctrine of the necessary indwelling of sin in the soul till death involves other antiscriptural consequences. It supposes that the seat of sin is in the flesh, and thus harmonizes with the pagan philosophy, which attributed all evil to matter. The doctrine of the Bible, on the contrary, is, that the seat of sin is in the soul; and it makes it one of the proofs of the fall and corruption of our spiritual nature, that we are in bondage to the appetites and motions of the flesh. Nor does the theory which places the necessity of sinning in the connection of the soul with the body account for the whole moral case of man. There are sins, as pride, covetousness, malice, and others, which are wholly spiritual; and yet no exception is made in this doctrine of the necessary continuance of sin till death as to them. There is, surely, no need to wait for the separation of the soul from the body in order to be saved from evils which are the sole offspring of the spirit; and yet these are made as inevitable as the sins which more immediately connect themselves with the excitements of the animal nature.

This doctrine supposes, too, that the flesh must necessarily not only lust against the Spirit, but in no small degree, and on many occasions, be the conqueror: whereas, we are commanded, to "*mortify* the deeds of the body;" to "*crucify*," that is, to put to death, "the flesh;" "*to put off* the old man," which, in its full meaning, must import separation from sin in fact, as well as the renunciation of it in will; and "to *put on* the new man." Finally, the apostle expressly states, that though the flesh stands victoriously opposed to *legal* sanctification, it is not insuperable by evangelical holiness.—"For what *the law* could not do in that it was weak *through the flesh*, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh; that the righteousness of the law might be *fulfilled* in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit," Rom. viii, 3, 4. So inconsistent with the declarations and promises of the Gospel is the notion that, so long as we are in the body, "the flesh" must of necessity have at least the occasional dominion.

We conclude, therefore, as to the *time* of our complete sanctification, or, to use the phrase of the Apostle Paul, "the destruction of the body of sin;" that it can neither be referred to the hour of death, nor placed subsequently to this present life. The attainment of perfect freedom from sin is one to which believers are called during the present life; and is necessary to that completeness of "holiness," and of those active and passive graces of Christianity by which they are called to glorify God in this world, and to edify mankind.

Not only the time, but the *manner* also, of our sanctification has been matter of controversy: some contending that all attainable degrees of it are acquired by the process of gradual mortification and the acquisition of holy habits; others alleging it to be instantaneous, and the fruit of an act of faith in the Divine promises.

That the regeneration which accompanies justification is a large approach to this state of perfected holiness; and that all dying to sin, and all growth in grace, advances us nearer to this point of *entire* sanctity, is so obvious, that on these points there can be no reasonable dispute. But they are not at all inconsistent with a more instantaneous work, when, the depth of our natural depravity being more painfully felt, we plead in faith the accomplishment of the promises of God. The great question to be settled is, whether the deliverance sighed after be held out to us in these promises as a present blessing? And, from what has been already said, there appears no ground to doubt this; since no small violence would be offered to the passages of Scripture already quoted, as well as to many others, by the opposite opinion. All the promises of God which are not expressly, or from their *order*, referred to future time, are objects of *present trust;* and their fulfilment *now* is made conditional *only* upon our faith. They cannot, therefore, be pleaded in our prayers, with an entire reliance upon the truth of God, in vain. The general promise that we shall receive "all things whatsoever we ask in prayer, believing," comprehends, of course, "all things" suited to our case which God has engaged to bestow; and if the entire renewal of our nature be included in the number, without any limitation of time, except that in which we ask it in faith, then to this faith shall the promises of entire sanctification be given; which, in the nature of the case, supposes an instantaneous work immediately following upon our entire and unwavering faith.

The only plausible objections made to this doctrine may be answered in few words.

It has been urged, that this state of entire sanctification supposes future *impeccability*. Certainly not; for if angels and our first parents fell when in a state of immaculate sanctity, the renovated man cannot be placed, by his entire deliverance from inward sin, out of the reach of danger. This, remark, also, answers the allegation, that we should thus

be removed out of the reach of temptation; for the example of angels, and of the first man, who fell by temptation when in a state of native purity, proves that the absence of inward evil is not inconsistent with a state of probation; and that this, in itself, is no guard against the attempts and solicitations of evil.

It has been objected, too, that this supposed state renders the atonement and intercession of Christ superfluous in future. But the very contrary of this is manifest when the case of an evangelical renewal of the soul in righteousness is understood. This proceeds from the grace of God in Christ, through the Holy Spirit, as the efficient cause; it is received by faith as the instrumental cause; and the state itself into which we are raised is maintained, not by inherent native power, but by the continual presence and sanctifying influence of the Holy Spirit himself, received and retained in answer to ceaseless prayer; which prayer has respect solely to the merits of the death and intercession of Christ.

It has been farther alleged, that a person delivered from all inward and outward sin has no longer need to use the petition of the Lord's prayer,—"and forgive us our trespasses;" because he has no longer need of pardon. To this we reply, 1. That it would be absurd to suppose that any person is placed under the necessity of "trespassing," in order that a general prayer designed for men in a mixed condition might retain its aptness to every particular case. 2. That trespassing of every kind and degree is not supposed by this prayer to be continued, in order that it might be used always in the same *import*, or otherwise it might be pleaded against the renunciation of any trespass or transgression whatever. 3. That this petition is still relevant to the case of the entirely sanctified and the evangelically perfect, since neither the perfection of the first man nor that of angels is in question; that is, a perfection measured by the perfect law, which, in its obligations, contemplates all creatures as having sustained no injury by moral lapse, and admits, therefore, of no excuse from infirmities and mistakes of judgment; nor of any degree of obedience below that which beings created naturally perfect, were capable of rendering. There may, however, be an entire sanctification of a being rendered *naturally* weak and *imperfect*, and so liable to mistake and infirmity, as well as to defect in the *degree* of that absolute obedience and service which the law of God, never bent or lowered to human weakness, demands from all. These defects, and mistakes, and infirmities, may be quite consistent with the entire sanctification of the soul and the *moral* maturity of a being still *naturally* infirm and imperfect. Still, farther, if this were not a sufficient answer it may be remarked, that we are not the ultimate judges of our own case as to our "trespasses," or our exemption from them; and we are not, therefore, to put ourselves into the place of God, "who is greater

than our hearts." So, although St. Paul says, "I know nothing by myself," that is, I am conscious of no offence, he adds, "yet am I not hereby justified; but he that judgeth me is the Lord:" to whom, therefore, the appeal is every moment to be made through Christ the Mediator, and who, by the renewed testimony of his Spirit, assures every true believer of his acceptance in his sight.

Another benefit which accrues to all true believers, is the RIGHT TO PRAY, with the special assurance that they shall be heard in all things which are according to the will of God. "And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us." It is under this gracious institution that all good men are constituted intercessors for others, even for the whole world; and that God is pleased to order many of his dispensations, both as to individuals and to nations, in reference to "his elect who cry day and night unto him."

With respect to every real member of the body or Church of Christ, the PROVIDENCE of God is *special;* in other words, they are *individually* considered in the administration of the affairs of this life by the Sovereign Ruler, and their measure of good and of evil is appointed with constant reference to their advantage, either in this life or in eternity. "The hairs of their head," are, therefore, said to be "numbered," and "all things" are declared "to work together for their good."

To them also VICTORY OVER DEATH is awarded. They are freed from its fear in respect of consequences in another state; for the apprehension of future punishment is removed by the remission of their sins, and the attestation of this to their minds by the Holy Spirit, while a patient resignation to the will of God, as to the measure of their bodily sufferings, and the strong hopes and joyful anticipations of a better life cancel and subdue that horror of pain and dissolution which is natural to man. "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who, through fear of death, were all their life time subject to bondage," Heb. ii, 14, 15.

THE IMMEDIATE RECEPTION OF THE SOUL INTO A STATE OF BLESSEDNESS after death, is also another of the glorious promises of the new covenant to all them that endure to the end, and "die in the Lord."

This is so explicitly taught in the New Testament, that, but for the admission of a philosophical error, it would, probably, have never been doubted by any persons professing to receive that book, as of Divine authority. Till, in recent times, the belief in the materiality of the human soul was chiefly confined to those who entirely rejected the Christian revelation; but, when the Socinians adopted this notion, without wholly rejecting the Scriptures, it was promptly perceived that the doc-

trine of an intermediate state, and the materiality of the soul, could not be maintained together; (4) and the most violent and disgraceful criticisms and evasions have, therefore, by this class of interpreters been resorted to, in order to save a notion as unphilosophical as it is contrary to the word of God. Nothing can be more satisfactory than the observations of Dr. Campbell on this subject.

"Many expressions of Scripture, in the natural and obvious sense, imply that an intermediate and separate state of the soul is actually to succeed death. Such are the words of the Lord to the penitent thief upon the cross, Luke xxiii, 43. Stephen's dying petition, Acts vii, 59. The comparisons which the Apostle Paul makes in different places, (2 Cor. v, 6, &c; Phil. i, 21,) between the enjoyment which true Christians can attain by their continuance in this world, and that which they enter on at their departure out of it, and several other passages. Let the words referred to be read by any judicious person, either in the original or in the common translation, which is sufficiently exact for this purpose, and let him, setting aside all theory or system, say, candidly, whether they would not be understood, by the gross of mankind, as presupposing that the soul may and will exist separately from the body, and be susceptible of happiness or misery in that state. If any thing could add to the native evidence of the expressions, it would be the unnatural meanings that are put upon them, in order to disguise that evidence. What shall we say of the metaphysical distinction introduced for this purpose between absolute and relative time? The Apostle Paul, they are sensible, speaks of the saints as admitted to enjoyment in the presence of God, immediately after death. Now, to palliate the direct contradiction there is in this to their doctrine, that the vital principle, which is all they mean by the soul, remains extinguished between death and the resurrection, they remind us of the difference there is between absolute or real and relative or apparent time. They admit, that if the apostle be understood as speaking of real time, what is said flatly contradicts their system; but, say they, his words must be interpreted as spoken only of apparent time. He talks, indeed, of entering on a state of enjoyment immediately after death, though there may be many thousands of years between the one and the other; for he means only, that when that state shall commence, however distant, in reality, the time may be, the person entering upon it will not be sensible of that distance, and, consequently, there will be to him an apparent coincidence with the

(4) A few divines, and but few, have also been found, who, still admitting the essential distinction between body and spirit, have thought that their separation by death incapacitated the soul for the exercise of its powers. This suspension they call "the sleep of the soul." With the Materialist death causes the entire annihilation, for the time, of the thinking property of matter. Both opinions are, however, refuted by the same Scriptural arguments.

moment of his death. But does the apostle any where give a hint that this is his meaning? or is it what any man would naturally discover from his words? That it is exceedingly remote from the common use of language, I believe hardly any of those, who favour this scheme, will be partial enough to deny. Did the sacred penmen then mean to put a cheat upon the world, and, by the help of an equivocal expression, to flatter men with the hope of entering, the instant they expire, on a state of felicity, when, in fact, they knew that it would be many ages before it would take place? But were the hypothesis about the extinction of the mind between death and the resurrection well founded, the apparent coincidence they speak of is not so clear as they seem to think it. For my part, I cannot regard it as an axiom, and I never heard of any who attempted to demonstrate it. To me it appears merely a corollary from Mr. Locke's doctrine, which derives our conceptions of time from the succession of our ideas, which, whether true or false, is a doctrine to be found only among certain philosophers, and which, we may reasonably believe, never came into the heads of those to whom the Gospel, in the apostolic age, was announced.

"I remark that even the curious equivocations (or, perhaps, more properly, mental reservation) that has been devised for them, will not, in every case, save the credit of apostolical veracity. The words of Paul to the Corinthians are, *Knowing that while we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord; again, we are willing rather to be absent from the body and present with the Lord.* Could such expressions have been used by him, if he had held it impossible to be with the Lord, or, indeed, any where, without the body; and that, whatever the change was which was made by death, he could not be in the presence of the Lord, till he returned to the body? Absence from the body, and presence with the Lord, were never, therefore, more unfortunately combined than in this illustration. Things are combined here as coincident, which, on the hypothesis of those gentlemen, are incompatible. If recourse be had to the original, the expressions in Greek are, if possible, still stronger. They are οἱ ἐνδημοῦντες ἐν τῷ σώματι, *those who dwell in the body*, who are ἐκδημοῦντες ἀπὸ τοῦ Κυρίου, *at a distance from the Lord.* As, on the contrary, they are οἱ ἐκδημοῦντες ἐκ τοῦ σώματος, *those who have travelled out of the body*, who are οἱ ἐνδημοῦντες πρὸς τὸν Κύριον, *those who reside, or are present with the Lord.* In the passage to the Philippians, also, the commencement of his presence with the Lord is represented as coincident, not with his return to the body, but with his leaving it; with the dissolution, not with the restoratian of the union.

"From the tenor of the New Testament, the sacred writers appear to proceed on the supposition that the soul and the body are naturally distinct and separable, and that the soul is susceptible of pain or plea-

sure in a state of separation. It were endless to enumerate all the places which evince this. The story of the rich man and Lazarus, Luke xvi, 22, 23. The last words of our Lord upon the cross, Luke xxiii, 46, and of Stephen, when dying. Paul's doubts, whether he was in the body or out of the body, when he was translated to the third heaven and paradise, 2 Cor. xii, 2, 3, 4. Our Lord's words to Thomas, to satisfy him that he was not a spirit, Luke xxiv, 39. And, to conclude, the express mention of the denial of spirits as one of the errors of the Sadducees. Acts xxiii, 8, *For the Sadducees say there is no resurrection, neither angel nor spirit*, μεδε αγγελον μεδε πνευμα. All these are irrefragable evidences of the general opinion on this subject of both Jews and Christians. By *spirit*, as distinguished from *angel*, is evidently meant the departed spirit of a human being; for, that man is here, before his natural death, possessed of a vital and intelligent principle, which is commonly called his soul or spirit, it was never pretended that they denied." (*Diss.* vi, part 2.)

In this intermediate, but felicitous and glorious state, the disembodied spirits of the righteous will remain in joy and felicity with Christ, until the general judgment; when another display of the gracious effects of our redemption, by Christ, will appear in the glorious RESURRECTION of their bodies to an *immortal life:* thus distinguishing them from the wicked, whose resurrection will be to "shame and everlasting contempt," or, to what may be emphatically termed, an *immortal death.*

On this subject no point of discussion, of any importance, arises among those who admit the truth of Scripture, except as to the way in which the doctrine of the resurrection of the body is to be understood; —whether a resurrection of the substance of the body be meant, or of some minute and indestructible part of it. The latter theory has been adopted for the sake of avoiding certain supposed difficulties. It cannot, however, fail to strike every impartial reader of the New Testament, that the doctrine of the resurrection is there taught without any nice distinctions. It is always exhibited as a miraculous work; and represents the same body which is laid in the grave as the subject of this change from death to life, by the power of Christ. Thus, our Lord was raised in the same body in which he died, and his resurrection is constantly held forth as the model of ours; and the Apostle Paul expressly says, "Who shall change *our vile body*, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body." The only passage of Scripture which appears to favour the notion of the rising of the immortal body from some indestructible germ, is 1 Cor. xv, 35, &c, "But some man will say, How are the dead raised up, and with what body do they come? Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened except it die; and that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it

may chance of wheat, or of some other grain," &c. If, however, it had been the intention of the apostle, holding this view of the case, to meet objections to the doctrine of the resurrection, grounded upon the difficulties of conceiving how the same body, in the popular sense, could be raised up in substance, we might have expected him to correct this misapprehension, by declaring that this was not the Christian doctrine; but that some small parts of the body only, bearing as little proportion to the whole as the germ of a seed to the plant, would be preserved, and be unfolded into the perfected body at the resurrection. Instead of this, he goes on immediately to remind the objector of the differences which exist between material bodies as they now exist; between the plant and the bare or naked grain; between one plant and another; between the flesh of men, of beasts, of fishes, and of birds; between celestial and terrestrial bodies; and between the lesser and greater celestial luminaries themselves. Still farther he proceeds to state the difference, not between the germ of the body to be raised, and the *body* given at the resurrection; but between *the body itself*, understood popularly, which dies, and the body which shall be raised. "It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption," which would not be true of the supposed *incorruptible* and imperishable germ of this hypothesis; and can only be affirmed of the body itself, considered in substance, and in its present state corruptible. Farther, the question put by the objector, "How are the dead raised up?" does not refer to the *modus agendi* of the resurrection, or the process or manner in which the thing is to be effected, as the advocates of the germ hypothesis appear to assume.—This is manifest from the answer of the apostle, who goes on immediately to state, not in what *manner* the resurrection is to be effected, but what shall be the state or condition of the resurrection body, which is no answer at all to the question, if it be taken in that sense.

The first of the two questions in the passage referred to relates to the *possibility* of the resurrection, "How are the dead raised up?" The second to the *kind of body* which they are to take, supposing the fact to be allowed. Both questions, however, imply a denial of the fact, or, at least, express a strong doubt concerning it. It is thus that πως, "*how*," in the first question, is taken in many passages where it is connected with a verb; (5) and the second question only expresses the

(5) Gen. xxxix, 9, Πως ποιησω, How shall I,—how is it *possible* that I should do this great wickedness? "How, then, *can* I," say our translators. Exod. vi, 12, "Behold, the children of Israel have not hearkened unto me; how, then, shall Pharaoh hear me?"—πως ακουσεται μου Φαραω;—how is it *likely*, or *possible*, that Pharaoh should hear me? See also verse 30. Judges xvi, 15, "And she said unto him, Πως λεγεις, How *canst* thou say I love thee?" 2 Sam. xi, 11, may also be considered in the LXX. 2 Kings x, 4, "But they were exceedingly afraid, and said, Behold, two kings stood not before him: και πως, how then shall we stand?"—how is it *possible* that we should stand? Job ix, 2, Πως γαρ εσται

general negation or doubt more particularly, by implying, that the objector could not conceive of any kind of body being restored to man, which would not be an evil and imperfection to him. For the very reason why some of the Christians of that age denied, or strongly doubted, the resurrection of the body; explaining it figuratively, and saying that it was past already; was, that they were influenced to this by the notion of their philosophical schools, that the body was the prison of the soul, and that the greatest deliverance men could experience was to be eternally freed from their connection with matter. Hence the early philosophizing sects in the Christian Church, the Gnostics, Marcionites, &c, denied the resurrection, on the same ground as the philosophers, and thought it opposed to that perfection which they hoped to enjoy in another world. Such persons appear to have been in the Church of Corinth as early as the time of St. Paul, for that in this chapter he answers the objections, not of pagans, but of professing Christians, appears from verse 12, "How say some *among you*, that there is no resurrection of the dead?" The objection, therefore, in the minds of these persons to the doctrine of the resurrection, did not lie against the doctrine of the raising up of the substance of the same body, so that, provided this notion could be dispensed with, they were prepared to admit, that a new material body might spring from its germ, as a plant from seed.—

δικαιος βροτος;—For how shall mortal man be just with, or in the presence of God?—how is it *possible?* See what follows. Psalm lxxii, (lxxiii,) 11; Πως γινω ὁ Θεος; "How doth God know?"—how is it *possible* that he should know? See the connection. Jer. viii, 8; Πως ερειτε, "How do ye say,"—how is that ye say,—how *can* ye say, We are wise? Ibid. xxix, 7, (xlvii, 7,) Πως ησυχασει; "How *can* it,"—the sword of the Lord,—"be quiet?" Ezek. xxxiii, 10, "If our transgressions and our sins be upon us, and we pine away in them, πως ζησομεθα how should we then live?" Matt. vii, 4, "Or how, πως, wilt thou say to thy brother?" where Rosenm. observes that πως has the force of negation. Ibid xii, 26, "If Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; πως ουν σταθησεται how shall then,"—how *can* then,—"his kingdom stand?" See also Luke xi, 18 Ibid. xxiii, 33, "Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, πως φυγητε, how *can* ye escape the damnation of hell?" "qui fieri *potest?*" Rosenm. Mark iv, 40, Πως οὐκ εχετε πιστιν; "How is it that ye have no faith?" Luke i, 34, may also be adduced. John v, 47, "If ye believe not his writings, πως—πιστευσετε; how shall ye,"—how *can* ye—"believe my words?" Rom. iii, 6, "God forbid: for then, πως κρινει, how shall God judge the world?"—how is it *possible?* See the preceding verse. Ibid. viii, 32, Πως—χαρισεται; "How shall he not,"—how is it *possible* but that he should,—"with him also freely give us all things." Ibid. x, 14, Πως—επικαλεσονται, "How then shall they,"—how is it *possible* that they should,—"call on him in whom they have not believed?" &c. 1 Tim. iii, 5, "For if a man know not how to rule his own house, πως, how shall he take care of the Church of God?" Heb. ii, 3, "How shall we escape,"—how is it *possible* that we should escape,—"if we neglect so great salvation?" 1 John iii, 17, Πως, "How dwelleth the love of God in him?"—how *can* it dwell? Comp. chap. iv, 20, where δυναται is added.

ney stumbled at the doctrine in every form, because it involved the cumstance of the reunion of the spirit with matter, which they ught an *evil*. When, therefore, the objector asks, "How are the ad raised up?" (6) he is to be understood, not as inquiring as to the ocess, but as to the possibility. The doubt may, indeed, be taken as implied negation of the possibility of the resurrection with reference God; and then the apostle, by referring to the springing up of the ain of corn, when dissolved and putrefied, may be understood to show at the event was not inconceivable, by referring to God's omnipotence, shown in his daily providence, which, *à priori*, would appear as marllous and incredible. But it is much more probable, that the impossibility implied in this question refers, not to the power of God, which ery Christian in the Church at Corinth must be supposed to have been ught to conceive of as almighty, and, therefore, adequate to the prostion of this effect; but as relating to the contrariety which was amed to exist between the doctrine of the reunion of the soul with e body, and those hopes of a higher condition in a future life, which th reason and revelation taught them to form. The second question, With what body do they come?" like the former, is a question not inquiry, but of denial, or, at least, of strong doubt, importing, that no ma could be entertained by the objector of any material body being ade the residence of a disenthralled spirit, which could comport with ose notions of deliverance from the bondage of corruption by death, hich the philosophy of the age had taught, and which Christianity elf did not discountenance. The questions, though different, come, erefore, nearly to the same import, and this explains why the apostle iefly dwells upon the answer to the latter only, by which, in fact, he plies to both. The grain cast into the earth even dies and is corpted, and that which is sown is not "the body which shall be," in form d quality, but "naked grain;" yet into the plant, in its perfect form, the same matter transformed. So the flesh of beasts, birds, fishes, d man, is the same matter, though exhibiting different qualities. So e bodies celestial are of the same matter as "bodies terrestrial;" and e more splendid luminaries of the heavens are, in substance, the same those of inferior glory. It is thus that the apostle reaches his conusion, and shows that the doctrine of our reunion with the body plies in it no imperfection—nothing contrary to the hopes of liberan "from the burden of this flesh;" because of the high and glorified alities which God is able to give to matter; of which the superior rity, splendour, and energy of some material things in this world, in mparison of others, is a visible demonstration. For after he has given ese instances, he adds, "So is the resurrection of the dead; it is sown

(6) The present indicative verb is here used, as it is generally throughout this apter, for the future.

in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural (an animal) body, it is raised a spiritual body," so called, "as being accommodated to a spirit, and far excelling all that is required for the transaction of earthly and terrene affairs;" (*Rosenmuller*;) and so intent is the apostle on dissipating all those gross representations of the resurrection of the body which the objectors had assumed as the ground of their opposition, and which they had, probably, in their disputations, placed under the strongest views, that he guards the true Christian doctrine, on this point, in the most explicit manner, "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption;" and, therefore, let no man henceforward affirm, or assume it in his argument, that we teach any such doctrine. This, also, he strengthens, by showing, that as to the saints who are alive at the second coming of Christ, they also shall be in like manner "CHANGED," and that "this corruptible," as to them also, "shall put on incorruption."

Thus, in the argument, the apostle confines himself wholly to the possibility of the resurrection of the body in a refined and glorified state; but omits all reference to the mode in which the thing will be effected, as being out of the line of the objector's questions, and in itself above human thought, and wholly miraculous. It is, however, clear, that when he speaks of *the body* as the subject of this wondrous "change," he speaks of it popularly, as the same body in substance, whatever changes in its qualities or figure may be impressed upon it. Great *general* changes it will experience, as from corruption to incorruption, from mortality to immortality; great changes of a *particular* kind will also take place, as its being freed from deformities and defects, and the accidental varieties produced by climate, aliments, labour, and hereditary diseases. It is also laid down by our Lord, that, "in the resurrection they shall neither marry nor be given in marriage, but be like to the angels of God;" and this also implies a certain change of structure; and we may gather from the declaration of the apostle, that though "the stomach" is now adapted "to meats, and meats to the stomach, God will destroy both it and them;" that the animal appetite for food will be removed, and the organ now adapted to that appetite have no place in the renewed frame. But great as these changes are, the human form will be retained in its perfection, after the model of our Lord's "glorious body," and the substance of the matter of which it is composed will not thereby be affected. That the same body which was laid in the grave shall arise out of it, is the manifest doctrine of the Scriptures.

The notion of an incorruptible germ, or that of an original and unchangeable *stamen*, out of which a new and glorious body, at the resurrection, is to spring, appears to have been borrowed from the speculations of

some of the Jewish rabbins, who speak of some such supposed part in the human frame, under the name LUZ, to which they ascribe marvellous properties, and from which the body was to arise. No allusion is, however made to any such opinion by the early fathers, in their defences of the doctrine of the resurrection from the dead. On the contrary, they argue in such a way as to prove the possibility of the *reunion* of the *scattered parts* of the body; which sufficiently shows that the germ theory had not been resorted to, by Christian divines at least, in order to harmonize the doctrine of the resurrection with philosophy. So Justin Martyr, in a fragment of his concerning the resurrection, expressly answers the objection, that it is impossible for the flesh, after a corruption and perfect dissolution of all its parts, should be united together again, and contends, "that if the body be not raised complete, with all its integral parts, it would argue a want of power in God;" and although some of the Jews adopted the notion of the germinating or springing up of the body from some one indestructible part, yet the most orthodox of their rabbins contended for the resurrection of the same body. So Maimonides says, "Men, in the same manner as they before lived, with the same body, shall be restored to life by God, and sent into this life with the same identity:" and "that nothing can properly be called a resurrection of the dead, but the return of the very same soul, into the very same body from which it was separated." (*Rambam apud Pocockium in Notis Miscellan. Port. Mos.* p. 125.)

This theory, under its various forms, and whether adopted by Jews or Christians, was designed, doubtless, to render the doctrine of a resurrection from the dead less difficult to conceive, and more acceptable to philosophic minds; but, like most other attempts of the same kind to bring down the supernatural doctrines of revelation to the level of our conceptions, it escapes none of the original difficulties, and involves itself in others far more perplexing.

For if by this hypothesis it was designed to remove the difficulty of conceiving how the scattered parts of one body could be preserved from becoming integral parts of other bodies, it supposes that the constant care of Providence is exerted to maintain the incorruptibility of those individual germs, or stamina, so as to prevent their assimilation with each other. Now, if they have this by original quality, then the same quality may just as easily be supposed to appertain to every particle which composes a human body; so that though it be used for food, it shall not be capable of assimilation, in any circumstances, with another human body. But if these germs or stamina, have not this quality by their original nature, they can only be prevented from assimilating with each other by that operation of God which is present to all his works, and which must always be directed to secure the execution of his own ultimate designs. If this view be adopted, then, if the resort must at last be to

the superintendence of a Being of infinite power and wisdom, there is no greater difficulty in supposing that his care to secure this object shall extend to a million than to a thousand particles of matter. This is, in fact, the true and rational answer to the objection that the same piece of matter may happen to be a part of two or more bodies, as in the instances of men feeding upon animals which have fed upon men, and of men feeding upon one another. The question here is one which simply respects the frustrating a final purpose of the Almighty by an operation of nature. To suppose that he cannot prevent this, is to deny his power; to suppose him inattentive to it, is to suppose him indifferent to his own designs; and to assume that he employs care to prevent it, is to assume nothing greater, nothing in fact so great, as many instances of control, which are always occurring; as, for instance, the regulation of the proportion of the sexes in human births, which cannot be attributed to chance, but must either be referred to superintendence, or to some original law.

Thus these theories afford no relief to the only real difficulty involved in the doctrine, but leave the whole case still to be resolved into the almighty power of God. But they involve themselves in the fatal objection, that they are plainly in opposition to the doctrine of the Scriptures. For,—

1. There is no resurrection of *the body* on this hypothesis, because the germ or stamina, can in no good sense be called "*the body*." If a finger, or even a limb, is not the body, much less can these minuter parts be entitled to this appellation.

2. There is, on these theories, no resurrection at all. For if the preserved part be a germ, and the analogy of germination be adopted; then we have no longer a *resurrection* from *death*, but a *vegetation* from a suspended principle of secret *life*. If the stamina of Leibnitz be contended for, then *the body*, into which the soul enters at the resurrection, with the exception of these minute stamina, is provided for it by the addition and aggregation of new matter, and we have a *creation*, not a *resurrection*.

3. If bodies in either of these modes, are to be framed for the soul, by the addition of a large mass of new matter, the resurrection is made substantially the same with the pagan notion of the metempsychosis; and if St. Paul, at Athens, preached, not "Jesus and the resurrection," but Jesus and a transmigration into a new body, it will be difficult to account for his hearers scoffing at a doctrine, which had received the sanction of several of their own philosophic authorities.

Another objection to the resurrection of the body has been drawn from the changes of its substance during life. The answer to this is, that allowing a frequent and total change of the substance of the body (which, however, is but an hypothesis) to take place, it effects not the doctrine of

Scripture, which is, that the body which is laid in the grave shall be raised up. But then we are told, that if our bodies have in fact undergone successive changes during life, the bodies in which we have sinned or performed rewardable actions may not be, in many instances, the same bodies as those which will be actually rewarded or punished. We answer, that rewards and punishments have their relation to the body, not so much as it is the *subject* but the *instrument* of reward and punishment. It is the soul only which perceives pain or pleasure, which suffers or enjoys, and is, therefore, the only rewardable *subject*. Were we, therefore, to admit such corporeal mutations as are assumed in this objection, they affect not the case of our accountability. The personal identity or sameness of a rational being, as Mr. Locke has observed, consists in self consciousness:—"By this every one is to himself what he calls *self*, without considering whether that self be continued in the same or divers substances. It was by the same *self* which reflects on an action done many years ago, that the action was performed." If there were indeed any weight in this objection, it would affect the proceedings of human criminal courts in all cases of offences committed at some distance of time; but it contradicts the common sense, because it contradicts the common consciousness and experience of mankind.

PART THIRD.

THE MORALS OF CHRISTIANITY.

CHAPTER I.

The Moral Law

Of the law of God, as the subject of a Divine and adequately authenticated revelation, some observations were made in the first part of this work. That such a law exists, so communicated to mankind, and contained in the Holy Scriptures;—that we are under obligation to obey it as the declared will of our Creator and Lord;—that this obligation is grounded upon our natural relation to him as creatures made by his power, and dependent upon his bounty, are points which need not, therefore, be again adverted to, nor is it necessary to dwell upon the circumstances and degrees of its manifestation to men, under those former dispensations of the true religion which preceded Christianity. We have exhibited the leading doctrines of the Scriptures, as they are found in that perfected system of revealed religion, which we owe to our Saviour, and to his apostles, who wrote under the inspiration of that Holy Spirit whom he sent forth "to lead them into all truth;" and we shall now find in the discourses of our Lord, and in the apostolical writings, a system of moral principles, virtues, and duties, equalling in fulness and perfection that great body of doctrinal truth which is contained in the New Testament; and deriving from it its vital influence and efficacy.

It is, however, to be noticed, that the morals of the New Testament are not proposed to us in the form of a regular code. Even in the books of Moses, which have the legislative form to a great extent, all the principles and duties which constituted the full character of "godliness," under that dispensation, are not made the subjects of formal injunction by particular precepts. They are partly infolded in general principles, or often take the form of injunction in an apparently incidental manner, or are matters of obvious inference. A preceding code of traditionary moral law is also all along supposed in the writings of Moses and the prophets, as well as a consuetudinary ritual and a doctrinal theology; both transmitted from the patriarchs. This, too, is eminently the case with Christianity. It supposes that all who believed in Christ admitted the Divine authority of the Old Testament; and it assumes the perpetual authority of its morals, as well as the truth of its fundamental theology. The constant allusions in the New Testament

to the moral rules of the Jews and patriarchs, either expressly as precepts, or as the data of argument, sufficiently guard us against the notion, that what has not in so many words been re-enacted by Christ and his apostles is of no authority among Christians. In a great number of instances, however, the form is directly preceptive, so as to have all the explicitness and force of a regular code of law; and is, as much as a regular code could be, a declaration of the sovereign will of Christ, enforced by the sanctions of eternal life and death.

This, however, is a point on which a few confirmatory observations may be usefully adduced.

No part of the preceding dispensation, designated generally by the appellation of "THE LAW," is repealed in the New Testament, but what is obviously ceremonial, typical, and incapable of co-existing with Christianity. Our Lord, in his discourse with the Samaritan woman, declares, that the hour of the abolition of the temple worship was come; the Apostle Paul, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, teaches us that the Levitical services were but *shadows*, the *substance* and *end* of which is Christ; and the ancient visible Church, as constituted upon the ground of natural descent from Abraham, was abolished by the establishment of a spiritual body of believers to take its place.

No precepts of a purely political nature, that is, which respect the civil subjection of the Jews to their theocracy, are, therefore, of any force to us as *laws*, although they may have, in many cases, the greatest authority as *principles*. No ceremonial precepts can be binding, since they were restrained to a period terminating with the death and resurrection of Christ; nor are even the patriarchal rites of circumcision and the passover obligatory upon Christians, since we have sufficient evidence, that they were of an adumbrative character, and were laid aside by the first inspired teachers of Christianity.

With the MORAL PRECEPTS which abound in the Old Testament the case is very different, as sufficiently appears from the different and even contrary manner in which they are always spoken of by Christ and his apostles. When our Lord, in his sermon on the mount, says, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets; I am not come to destroy the law; but to fulfil;" that is, to confirm or establish it;—the entire scope of his discourse shows, that he is speaking exclusively of the moral precepts of THE LAW, eminently so called, and of the moral injunctions of the prophets founded upon them, and to which he thus gives an equal authority. And in so solemn a manner does he enforce this, that he adds, doubtless as foreseeing that attempts would be made by deceiving or deceived men professing his religion to lessen the authority of the moral law,—"Whosoever, therefore, shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven;" that is, as St. Chrysostom inter-

prets, "he shall be the farthest from attaining heaven and happiness, which imports that he shall not attain it at all."

In like manner St. Paul, after having strenuously maintained the doctrine of justification by faith alone, anticipates an objection by saying, "Do we then make void the law through faith?" and subjoins "God forbid, yea, we *establish* the law:" meaning by "the law," as the context and his argument shows, the moral and not the ceremonial law.

After such declarations it is worse than trifling for any to contend, that, in order to establish the authority of the moral law of the Jews over Christians, it ought to have been formally re-enacted. To this we may, however, farther reply, not only that many important moral principles and rules found in the Old Testament were never *formally* enacted among the Jews, were traditional from an earlier age, and received at different times the more indirect authority of inspired recognition; but, to put the matter in a stronger light, that all the leading moral precepts of the Jewish Scriptures are, in point of fact, proposed in a manner which has the full force of formal re-enactment, as the laws of the Christian Church. This argument, from the want of formal re-enactment, has therefore no weight. The summary of the law and the prophets, which is to love God with all our heart, and to serve him with all our strength, and to love our neighbour as ourselves, is unquestionably enjoined, and even re-enacted by the Christian Lawgiver. When our Lord is explicitly asked by "one who came unto him, and said, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?" the answer given shows that the moral law contained in the decalogue is so in force under the Christian dispensation, that obedience to it is necessary to final salvation:—"If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments." And that nothing ceremonial is intended by this term is manifest from what follows. "He saith unto him, Which? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder. Thou shalt not commit adultery. Thou shalt not steal," &c, Matt. xix, 17–19. Here, also, we have all the force of a formal re-enactment of the decalogue, a part of it being evidently put for the whole. Nor were it difficult to produce passages from the discourses of Christ and the writings of the apostles, which enjoin all the precepts of this law taken separately, by their authority, as indispensable parts of Christian duty, and that, too, under their original sanctions of life and death: so that the two circumstances which form the true character of A LAW in its highest sense, DIVINE AUTHORITY and PENAL SANCTIONS, are found as truly in the New Testament as in the Old. It will not, for instance, be contended, that the New Testament does not enjoin the acknowledgment and worship of one God alone; nor that it does not prohibit idolatry; nor that it does not level its maledictions against false and profane swearing; nor that the Apostle

Paul does not use the very words of the fifth commandment preceptively when he says, Eph. vi, 2, "Honour thy father and mother, which is the first commandment with promise;" nor that murder, adultery, theft, false witness, and covetousness, are not all prohibited under pain of exclusion from the kingdom of God. Thus, then, we have the whole decalogue brought into the Christian code of morals by a distinct injunction of its separate precepts, and by their recognition as of permanent and unchangeable obligation: the fourth commandment, respecting the Sabbath only, being so far excepted, that its injunction is not so expressly marked. This, however, is no exception in fact; for beside that its original place in the two tables sufficiently distinguishes it from all positive, ceremonial, and typical precepts, and gives it a moral character, in respect of its *ends*, which are, first, *mercy* to servants and cattle, and, second, the *worship* of Almighty God, undisturbed by worldly interruptions and cares, it is necessarily included in that "law" which our Lord declares he came not to destroy, or abrogate; in that "law" which St. Paul declares to be "established by faith;" and among those "commandments" which our Lord *declares* must be "kept," if any one would "enter into life." To this, also, the practice of the apostles is to be added, who did not cease themselves from keeping one day in seven holy, nor teach others so to do; but gave to "the Lord's day" that eminence and sanctity in the Christian Church which the seventh day had in the Jewish, by consecrating it to holy uses; an alteration not affecting the precept at all, except in an unessential circumstance, (if, indeed, in that,) and in which we may suppose them to act under Divine suggestion.

Thus, then, we have the obligation of the whole decalogue as fully established in the New Testament as in the Old as if it had been formally re-enacted; and that no formal re-enactment of it took place, is itself a presumptive proof that it was never regarded by the Lawgiver as temporary, which the formality of republication might have supposed.

It is important to remark, however, that although the moral laws of the Mosaic dispensation pass into the Christian code, they stand there in other and higher circumstances; so that the New Testament is a more perfect dispensation of the knowledge of the moral will of God than the old. In particular,

1. They are more expressly extended to the heart, as by our Lord, in his sermon on the mount; who teaches us that the thought and inward purpose of any offence is a violation of the law prohibiting its external and visible commission.

2. The principles on which they are founded are carried out in the New Testament into a greater variety of duties, which, by embracing more perfectly the social and civil relations of life, are of a more universal character.

3. There is a much more enlarged injunction of positive and particular virtues, especially those which constitute the Christian temper.

4. By all overt acts being inseparably connected with corresponding principles in the heart, in order to constitute acceptable obedience, which principles suppose the regeneration of the soul by the Holy Ghost. This moral renovation is, therefore, held out as necessary to our salvation, and promised as a part of the grace of our redemption by Christ.

5. By being connected with promises of Divine assistance, which is peculiar to a law connected with evangelical provisions.

6. By their having a living illustration in the perfect and practical example of Christ.

7. By the higher sanctions derived from the clearer revelation of a future state, and the more explicit promises of eternal life, and threatenings of eternal punishment.

It follows from this, that we have in the Gospel the most complete and perfect revelation of moral law ever given to men; and a more exact manifestation of the brightness, perfection, and glory of that law, under which angels and our progenitors in paradise were placed, and which it is at once the delight and interest of the most perfect and happy beings to obey.

It has, however, fared with morals as with doctrines, that they have been often, and by a strange perversity, studied, without any reference to the authority of the Scriptures. As we have had systems of NATURAL RELIGION drawn out of the materials furnished by the Scriptures, and then placed to the sole account of human reason; so we have also various systems of morals drawn, as far as the authors thought fit, from the same source, and put forth under the title of MORAL PHILOSOPHY, implying too often, or, at least, sanctioning the inference, that the unassisted powers of man are equally adequate to the discovery of doctrine and duty; or, at best, that Christianity but perfects what uninspired men are able not only to commence, but to carry onward to a considerable approach to perfection. This observation may be made as to both—that whatever is found correct in doctrine, and pure in morals in ancient writers or systems, may be traced to indirect revelation; and that so far as mere reason has applied itself to discovery in either, it has generally gone astray. The modern systems of natural religion and ethics are superior to the ancient, not because the reason of their framers is superior, but because they have had the advantage of a light from Christianity, which they have not been candid enough generally to acknowledge. For those who have written on such subjects with a view to lower the value of the Holy Scriptures, the remarks in the first part of this work must suffice; but of that class of moral philosophers, who hold the authority of the sacred books, and yet sedulously omit all

reference to them, it may be inquired what they propose, by disjoining morals from Christianity, and considering them as a separate science? authority they cannot gain, for no obligation to duty can be so high as the command of GOD; nor can that authority be applied in so direct a manner, as by a revelation of his will: and as for the perfection of their system, since they discover no duties not already enjoined in the Scriptures, or grounded upon some general principles they contain, they can find no apology, from the additions they make to our moral knowledge, to put Christianity, on all such subjects, wholly out of sight.

All attemps to teach morals, independent of Christianity, even by those who receive it as a Divine revelation, must, notwithstanding the great names which have sanctioned the practice, be considered as of mischievous tendency, although the design may have been laudable, and the labour, in some subordinate respects, not without utility:—

1. Because they silently convey the impression, that human reason, without assistance, is sufficient to discover the full duty of man toward God and toward his fellow creatures.

2. Because they imply a deficiency in the moral code of our religion, which does not exist; the fact being that, although these systems borrow much from Christianity, they do not take in the whole of its moral principles, and, therefore, so far as they are accepted, as substitutes, displace what is perfect for what is imperfect.

3. Because they turn the attention from what is fact, the revealed LAW of God, with its appropriate sanctions, and place the obligation to obedience either on fitness, beauty, general interest, or the natural authority of truth, which are all matters of opinion; or, if they ultimately refer it to the will of God, yet they *infer* that will through various reasonings and speculations, which in themselves are still matters of opinion and as to which men will feel themselves to be in some degree free.

4. The duties they enjoin are either merely outward in the act, and so they disconnect them from internal principles and habits, without which they are not acceptable to God, and but the shadows of real virtue, however beneficial they may be to men; or else they assume that human nature is able to engraft those principles and habits upon itself, and to practise them without abatement and interruption; a notion which is contradicted by those very Scriptures they hold to be of Divine authority.

5. Their separation of the *doctrines* of religion from its *morals*, leads to an entirely different process of promoting morality among men to that which the infinite wisdom and goodness of God has established in the Gospel. They lay down the rule of conduct, and recommend it from its excellence *per se*, or its influence upon individuals and upon society, or perhaps because it is manifested to be the will of the Supreme Being, indicated from the constitution of human nature, and the relations of men. But Christianity rigidly connects its doctrines with its

morals. Its doctrine of man's moral weakness is made use of to lead him to distrust his own sufficiency. Its doctrine of the atonement shows at once the infinite evil of sin, and encourages men to seek deliverance from its power. Its doctrine of regeneration by the influence of the Holy Spirit, implies the entire destruction of the love of evil, and the direction of the whole affection of the soul to universal virtue. Its doctrine of prayer opens to man a fellowship with God, invigorating to every virtue. The example of Christ, the imitation of which is made obligatory upon us, is in itself a moral system in action, and in principle; and the revelation of a future judgment brings the whole weight of the control of future rewards and punishments to bear upon the motives and actions of men, and is the source of that fear of offending God, which is the constant guard of virtue, when human motives would in a multitude of cases avail nothing.

It may indeed be asked, whether the teaching of morals must then in all cases be kept in connection with religion? and whether the philosophy of virtues and of vices, with the lower motives by which they are urged upon men, may not be usefully investigated? We answer, that if the end proposed by this is not altogether speculative, but something practical; if the case of an immoral world is taken up by moralists with reference to its cure, or even to its emendation in any effectual degree, the whole is then resolved into this simple question,—whether a weaker instrument shall be preferred to that which is powerful and effective? Certain it is that the great end of Christianity, so far as its influence upon society goes, is to moralize mankind; but its infinitely wise Author has established and authorized but ONE process for the correction of the practical evils of the world, and that is, the teaching and enforcement of THE WHOLE TRUTH as it stands in his own revelations; and to this only has he promised his special blessing. A distinct class of ethical teachers, imitating heathen philosophers in the principles and modes of moral tuition, is, in a Christian country, a violent anomaly; and implies an absurd return to the twilight of knowledge after the sun itself has arisen upon the world.

Within proper guards, and in strict connection with the *whole* Christian system, what is called moral philosophy is not, however, to be undervalued; and from many of the writers above alluded to much useful instruction may be collected, which, though of but little efficacy in itself, may be invigorated by uniting it with the vital and energetic doctrines of religion, and may thus become directive to the conduct of the serious Christian. Understanding then by moral philosophy, not that pride of science which borrows the discoveries of the Scriptures, and then exhibits itself as their rival, or affects to supply their deficiencies; but as a modest scrutiny into the reasons on which the moral precepts of revelation may be grounded, and a wise and honest application of its moral

principles to particular cases, it is a branch of science which may be usefully cultivated in connection with Christianity.

With respect to the *reasons* on which moral precepts rest, we may make a remark similar to that offered in a former part of this work, on the doctrines of revelation. Some of those doctrines rest wholly on the authority of the Revealer; others are accompanied with a manifest rational evidence; and a third class may partially disclose their *rationale* to the patient and pious inquirer. Yet the authority of each class as a subject of faith is the same; it rests upon the character of God and his relations to us; and that doctrine is equally binding which is enjoined on our faith without other rational evidence than that which proves it to be a part of a revelation from heaven, as that which exercises, and delights our rational faculties, by a disclosure of the internal evidence of its truth. When God has permitted us to "turn aside" to see some "great sight" of manifested wisdom, we are to obey the invitation; but still we are always to remember that the authority of a revealed truth stands on infinitely higher ground than our perception of its reasonableness.

So also as to the moral precepts of the Bible, the rational evidence is afforded in different degrees, and it is both allowable and laudable in us to investigate and collect it; but still with this caution, that the authority of such injunctions is not to be regulated by our perception of their reasons, although the reasons, when apparent, may be piously applied to commend the authority. The discoveries we may make of fitness or any other quality in a precept cannot be the highest reason of our obedience; but it may be a reason for obeying with accelerated alacrity. The obligation of the Sabbath would be the same were no obvious reasons of mercy and piety connected with it; but the influence of the precept upon our interests and that of the community commends the precept to our affections as well as to our sense of duty.

With respect to the *application* of general precepts, that practical wisdom which is the result of large and comprehensive observation has an important office. The precepts of a universal revelation must necessarily be, for the most part, general, because if rules had been given for each case in detail, then truly, as St. John observes, "the world could not have contained the books written." The application of these general principles to that variety of cases which arises in human affairs, is the work of the Christian preacher, and the Christian moralist. Where there is honesty of mind, ordinarily there can be no difficulty in this; and in cases which involve some difficulty, when the interpretation of the law is made, as it always ought, to favour the rule; and when, in doubtful cases, the safer course is adopted, such is the explicit character of the general principles of the Holy Scriptures, that no one can go astray. The moral philosophy which treats of *exceptions* to general rules, is always to be watched with jealousy; and ought to be shunned

when it presumes to form rules out of supposed exceptions. This is affecting to be wiser than the Lawgiver; and such philosophy assumes an authority in the control of human conduct to which it has no title; and steps in between individuals and their consciences in cases where almighty God himself has not chosen to relieve them; and where they are specially left, as all sometimes are, to "Him with whom they have to do," without the intervention of any third party. Systems of casuistry and cases of conscience have happily gone into general disuse. That they have done more harm upon the whole than good, and defiled more consciences than they have relieved, cannot be doubted by any one who has largely examined them. They have passed away just in proportion as the Scriptures themselves have been circulated through society, and as that preaching has been most prevalent which enforces the doctrine of supreme love to God and our neighbour, as the sum of the law and of the Gospel. They most abounded in the Romish Church, as best befitting its system of darkness and delusion; (7) and though works of this kind are found among Protestants in a better form, they have gradually and happily fallen into neglect.

A few words may here be offered on what has been termed the ground of moral obligation.

Some writers have placed this in "the eternal and necessary fitness of things;" which leaves the matter open to the varying conclusions which different individuals may draw, as to this eternal and necessary fitness; and still farther, leaves that very natural question quite unanswered,—Why is any one *obliged* to act according to the fitness of things?

Others have referred to a supposed original perception of what is right and wrong; a kind of fixed and permanent and unalterable moral sense, by which the qualities of actions are at once determined; and from the supposed universal existence of this perception, they have argued the obligation to act accordingly. This scheme, which seems to confound that in human nature to which an appeal may be made when the understanding is enlightened by real truth, with a discriminating and directive principle acting independently of instruction, is also unsatisfactory. For the moral sense is, in fact, found under the control of ignorance and error; nor does it possess a sensitiveness in all cases in proportion to the truth received into the understanding. The worst crimes have often been committed with a conviction of their being right, as in the case of religious persecutions; and the absence of the habit of attending to the quality of our actions often renders the abstract truth laid up in the understanding useless, as to its influence upon the conscience. But if all that is said of this moral sense were true, still it would not establish the

(7) M. le Feore, preceptor of Louis XIII, not unaptly called casuistry, "the art of quibbling with God."

principle of obligation. That supposes superior *authority;* and should we allow the moral sense to act uniformly, still how is the *obligation* to perform what it approves to be demonstrated, unless some higher consideration be added to the case?

More modern moralists have taken the tendency of any course of action to produce the greatest good upon the whole as the source of moral obligation; and with this they often connect the will of God, of which they consider this general tendency to be the manifestation. It were better, surely, to refer at once to the will of God, as *revealed* by himself without incumbering the subject with the circuitous, and, at best, doubtful process of first considering what is good upon the whole, and then inferring that this must needs be the will of a wise and benevolent Being. The objection, too, holds in this case, that this theory leaves it still a mere matter of opinion, in which an interested party is to be the judge, whether an action be upon the whole good; and gives a rule which would be with difficulty applied to some cases, and is scarcely at all applicable to many others which may be supposed.

The only satisfactory answer which the question as to the source of moral obligation, can receive, is, that it is found in THE WILL OF GOD. For since the question respects the duty of a created being with reference to his Creator, nothing can be more conclusive than that the Creator has an absolute right to the obedience of his creatures; and that the creature is in duty obliged to obey Him from whom it not only has received being, but by whom that being is constantly sustained. It has indeed been said, that even if it be admitted, that I am obliged to obey the will of God, the question is still open, "*Why* am I obliged to obey his will?" and that this brings us round to the former answer; because he can only will what is upon the whole best for his creatures. But this is confounding that which may be, and doubtless is, a rule to God in the commands which he issues, with that which really *obliges* the creature. Now, that which in truth obliges the creature is not the nature of the commands issued by God; but the relation in which the creature itself stands to God. If a creature can have no existence, nor any power or faculty independently of God, it can have no right to employ its faculties independently of him; and if it have no right to employ its faculties in an independent manner, the right to rule its conduct must rest with the Creator alone; and from this results the obligation of the creature to obey.

Such is the principle assumed in the Scriptures, where the creative and rectoral relations of God are inseparably united, and the obligation of obedience is made to follow upon the fact of our existence; and if the will of God, as the source of obligation, be so obvious a rule, the only remaining question is, whether we shall receive that will as it is expressly revealed by himself; or, wilfully forgetting that such a reve-

lation has been made, we shall proceed to *infer* it by various processes of induction? The answer to this might have been safely left to the common sense of mankind, had not the vanity of philosophizing so often interposed to perplex so plain a point.

We must not here confound the will of God as the source of moral *obligation*, with the notion that right and wrong have no existence but as they are so constituted by the will of God. They must have their foundation in the reality of things. *What* moral rectitude is, and *why* it *obliges*, are quite distinct questions. It is to the latter only that the preceding observations apply. As to the former, the following remarks, from a recent intelligent publication, are very satisfactory:—

"Virtue, as it regards man, is the conformity or harmony of his affections and actions with the various relations in which he has been placed, —of which conformity the perfect intellect of God, guided in its exercise by his infinitely holy nature, is the only infallible judge.

"*We sustain various relations to God himself.* He is our Creator,—our Preserver,—our Benefactor,—our Governor. 'He is the Framer of our bodies, and the Father of our spirits.' He sustains us 'by the word of his power;' for, as we are necessarily dependent beings, our continued existence is a kind of prolonged creation. We owe all that we possess to him; and our future blessings must flow from his kindness. Now there are obviously certain affections and actions which harmonize or correspond with these relations. To love and obey God manifestly befit our relation to him, as that great Being from whom our existence as well as all our comforts flow. He who showers his blessings upon us ought to possess our affections; he who formed us has a right to our obedience. It is not stated merely, let it be observed, that it is impossible to contemplate our relation to God without perceiving that we are morally bound to love and obey him; (though that is a truth of great importance;) for I do not consent to the propriety of the representation, that virtue depends either upon our perceptions or our feelings. There is a real harmony between the relations in which we stand to God, and the feelings and conduct to which reference has been made; and therefore the human mind has been formed capable of perceiving and feeling it.

"*We sustain various relations to each other.* God has formed 'of one blood all the families of the earth.' Mutual love and brotherly kindness, the fruit of love, are required by this relation,—they harmonize or correspond with it. We are children; we are loved, and guarded, and supported, and tended with unwearied assiduity by our parents. Filial affection and filial obedience are demanded by this relation; no other state of mind, no other conduct, will harmonize with it. We are, perhaps, on the other hand, parents. Instrumentally at least we have imparted existence to our children; they depend on us for protection, support, &c; and to

render that support, is required by the relation we bear to them. It is, however, needless to specify the various relations in which we stand to each other. With reference to all I again say, that they necessarily involve obligations to certain states of mind, and certain modes of conduct, as harmonizing with the relations; and that rectitude is the conformity of the character and conduct of an individual with the relations in which he stands to the beings by whom he is surrounded.

"It is by no means certain to me, that this harmony between the actions and the relations of a moral agent, is not what we are to understand by that 'conformity to the fitness of things,' in which some writers have made the essence of virtue to consist. Against this doctrine, it has been objected, that it is indefinite, if not absurd; because, as it is alleged, it represents an action as right and fit, without stating what it is fit for,—an absurdity as great, says the objector, as it would be to say that 'the angles at the base of an isosceles triangle are equal without adding to one another, or to any other angle.' Dr. Brown also, in arguing against this doctrine says, 'There must be a principle of moral regard, independent of reason, or reason may in vain see a thousand fitnesses, and a thousand truths; and would be warmed with the same lively emotions of indignation, against an inaccurate timepiece or an error in arithmetic calculation, as against the wretch who robbed, by every fraud that could elude the law, those who had already little of which they could be deprived, that he might riot a little more luxuriously, while the helpless, whom he had plundered, were starving around him.' Now, why may we not say, in answer to the former objector, that the conformity of an action with the relations of the agent, is the fitness for which Clarke contends? And why may not we reply to Dr. Brown, that,—allowing, as we do, the necessity of that susceptibility of moral emotion for which he contends,—the emotion of approbation which arises on the contemplation of a virtuous action, is not the virtue of the action, nor the perception of its accordance with the relations of the agent, BUT THE ACCORDANCE ITSELF? 'That a being,' says Dewar, 'endowed with certain powers, is bound to love and obey the Creator and Preserver of all, is truth, whether I perceive it or no; and we cannot perceive it possible that it can ever be reversed.'

"All the relations to which reference has been made, are, in one sense, arbitrary. Our existence as creatures is to be ascribed to the mere good pleasure of God. The relations which bind society together, the conjugal, parental, filial relation, depend entirely upon the sovereign will of Him who gave us our being; but the conduct to which these relations oblige us, is by no means arbitrary. Having determined to constitute the relations, he could not but enjoin upon us the conduct which his word prescribes. He was under no obligation to create us at all; but, having given us existence, he could not fail to command us

to love and obey him. There is a harmony between these relations, and these duties,—a harmony which is not only perceived by us,—for to state that merely, would seem to make our perceptions the rule, if not the foundation of duty,—but which is perceived by the perfect intellect of God himself. And since the relations we sustain were constituted by God, since he is the Judge of the affections and conduct which harmonize with these relations,—*that which appears right to him, being right on that account,—rectitude may be regarded as conformity to the moral nature of God, the ultimate standard of virtue.*" (*Payne's Elements of Mental and Moral Science.*)

To the revealed will of God we may now turn for information on the interesting subject of morals, and we shall find that the ethics of Christianity have a glory and perfection which philosophy has never heightened, and which its only true office is to display, and to keep before the attention of mankind.

CHAPTER II.

The Duties we owe to God.

The duties we owe to God are in Scripture summed up in the word "godliness," the foundation of which, and of duties of every other kind, is that entire

Submission to God, which springs from a due sense of that relation in which we stand to him, as creatures.

We have just seen that the right of an absolute sovereignty over us must, in the reason of the case, exist exclusively in Him that made us; and it is the perception and recognition of this, as a practical habit of the mind, which renders outward acts of obedience sincere and religious. The will of God is the only rule to man, in every thing on which that will has declared itself; and as it lays its injunctions upon the heart as well as the life, the rule is equally in force when it directs our *opinions*, our *motives*, and *affections*, as when it enjoins or prohibits external acts. We are his because he made us; and to this is added the confirmation of this right by our redemption: "Ye are not your own, but bought with a price; wherefore glorify God in your *bodies* and *spirits* which are *his*." These ideas of absolute right to command on the part of God, and of absolute obligation to universal obedience on the part of man, are united in the profession of St. Paul, "Whose I *am* and whom I *serve*;" and form the grand fundamental principle of "godliness" both in the Old and New Testament; the will of God being laid down in each, both as the highest *reason* and the most powerful motive to *obedience*. The application of this principle so established by the Scrip-

tures will show how greatly superior is the ground on which Christianity places moral virtue to that of any other system. For,

1. The will of God, which is the rule of duty, is authenticated by the whole of that stupendous evidence which proves the Scriptures to be of Divine original.

2. That will at once defines and enforces every branch of inward and outward purity, rectitude, and benevolence.

3. It annuls by its authority every other rule of conduct contrary to itself, whether it arise from custom, or from the example, persuasion, or opinions of others.

4. It is a rule which admits not of being lowered to the weak and fallen state of human nature; but, connecting itself with a gracious dispensation of supernatural help, it directs the morally imbecile to that remedy, and holds every one guilty of the violation of all that he is by nature and habit unable to perform, if that remedy be neglected.

5. It accommodates not itself to the interests or even safety of men; but requires that interest, honour, liberty, and life, should be surrendered, rather than it should sustain any violation.

6. It admits no exceptions in obedience; but requires it *whole* and *entire;* so that outward virtue cannot be taken in the place of that which has its seat in the heart; and it allows no acts to be really virtuous, but those which spring from a willing and submissive mind, and are done upon the vital principle of a distinct recognition of our rightful subjection to God.

Love to God. To serve and obey God on the conviction that it is *right* to serve and obey him, is in Christianity joined with that love to God which gives life and animation to service, and renders it the means of exalting our pleasures, at the same time that it accords with our convictions. The supreme love of God is the chief, therefore, of what have been called our *theopathetic* affections. It is the sum and the end of law; and though lost by us in Adam, is restored to us by Christ. When it regards God absolutely, and in himself, as a being of infinite and harmonious perfections and moral beauties, it is that movement of the soul toward him which is produced by admiration, approval, and delight. When it regards him relatively, it fixes upon the ceaseless emanations of his goodness to us in the continuance of the existence which he at first bestowed; the circumstances which render that existence felicitous; and, above all, upon that "great love wherewith he loved us," manifested in the gift of his Son for our redemption, and in saving us by his grace; or, in the forcible language of St. Paul, upon "the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness to us through Christ Jesus." Under all these views an unbounded gratitude overflows the heart which is influenced by this spiritual affection. But the love of God is more than a sentiment of gratitude. It rejoices in his perfections and glories, and

influence of combinations of circumstances which we cannot control, and of accidents which we cannot resist, that, unless we had assurances of being guided, upheld, and defended by a Supreme Power, we might become, and that not unreasonably, a prey to constant apprehensions, and the sport of the most saddening anticipations of the imagination Our sole remedy from these would, in fact, only be found in insensibility and thoughtlessness; for to a reflecting and awakened mind, nothing can shut out uneasy fears but faith in God. In all ages therefore this has been the resource of devout men: "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble; therefore will we not fear," &c, Psalm xlvi, 1. "Our fathers trusted in thee, and thou didst deliver them; they cried unto thee, and were delivered; they trusted in thee and were not confounded." And from our Lord's sermon on the mount it is clear, that one end of his teaching was to deliver men from the piercing anxieties which the perplexities of this life are apt to produce, by encouraging them to confide in the care and bounty of their "heavenly Father."

Our trust in God is enjoined in as many respects as he has been pleased to give us assurances of help, and promises of favour, in his own word. Beyond that, trust would be presumption, as not having authority; and to the full extent in which his gracious purposes toward us are manifested, it becomes a duty. And here too the same connection of this duty with the leading doctrines of our redemption, which we have remarked under the last particular, also displays itself. If morals be taught independent of religion, either affiance in God must be excluded from the list of duties toward God, or otherwise it will be inculcated without effect. A man who is conscious of unremitted sins, and who must therefore regard the administration of the Ruler of the world, as to him punitive and vengeful, can find no ground on which to rest his trust. All that he can do is to hope that his relations to this Being may in future become more favourable; but, for the present, his fears must prevent the exercise of his faith. What course then lies before him, but in the first instance to seek the restoration of the favour of his offended God, in that method which he has prescribed, namely, by repentance toward God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ? Till a Scriptural assurance is obtained of that change in his relations to God which is effected by the free and gracious act of forgiveness, all the reasons of general trust in the care, benediction, and guidance of God, are vain as to him, because they are not applicable to his case. But when friendship is restored between the parties, faith, however unlimited, has the highest reason. It is then "a sure confidence in the mercy of God through Christ," as that mercy manifests itself in all the promises which God has been pleased to make to his children, and in all those condescending relations with which he has been pleased to

invest himself, that under such manifestations he might win and secure our reliance. It is then the confidence not merely of creatures in a beneficent Creator, or of subjects in a gracious Sovereign, but of children in a Parent. It respects the supply of every want, temporal and eternal; the wise and gracious ordering of our concerns; the warding off, or the mitigation of calamities and afflictions; our preservation from all that can *upon the whole* be injurious to us; our guidance through life; our hope in death; and our future felicity in another world. This trust is a *duty* because it is a subject of command; and also because, after such demonstrations of kindness, distrust would imply a dishonourable denial of the love and faithfulness of God, and often also a criminal dependence upon the creature. It is a habit essential to piety. On that condition we "obtain promises," by making them the subjects of prayer; by its influence anxieties destructive to that calm contemplative habit of which true religion is both the offspring and the nurse, are expelled from the heart; a spiritual character is thus given to man, who walks as seeing "Him who is invisible;" and a noble and cheerful courage is infused into the soul, which elevates it above all cowardly shrinking from difficulty, suffering, pain, and death, and affords a practical exemplification of the exhortation of one who had tried the value of this grace in a great variety of exigencies: "Wait upon the Lord, be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart; wait, I say, upon the Lord."

The fear of God is associated with love, and trust, in every part of Holy Scripture; and is enjoined upon us as another of our leading duties.

This, however, is not a servile passion; for then it could not consist with love to God, and with delight and affiance in him. It is true that "the fear which hath torment;" that which is accompanied with painful apprehensions of his displeasure arising from a just conviction of our personal liability to it, is enjoined upon the careless and the impious. To produce this, the word of God fulminates in threatenings, and his judgments march through the earth exhibiting terrible examples of vengeance against one nation or individual for the admonition of others. But that fear of God which arises from apprehension of personal punishment, is not designed to be the habit of the mind; nor is it included in the frequent phrase, "the fear of the Lord," when that is used to express the whole of practical religion, or its leading principles. In that case its nature is, in part, expressed by the term "reverence," which is a due and humbling sense of the Divine majesty, produced and maintained in a mind regenerated by the Holy Spirit, by devout meditations upon the perfections of his infinite nature, his eternity and omniscience, his constant presence with us in every place, the depths of his counsels, the might of his power, the holiness, truth, and justice of his moral cha-

devoutly contemplates them as the highest and most interesting subjects of thought; it keeps the idea of this supremely beloved object constantly present to the mind; it turns to it with adoring ardour from the business and distractions of life; it connects it with every scene of majesty and beauty in nature, and with every event of general and particular providence; it brings the soul into fellowship with God, real and sensible, because vital; it moulds the other affections into conformity with what God himself wills or prohibits, loves or hates; it produces an unbounded desire to please him, and to be accepted of him in all things; it is jealous of his honour, unwearied in his service, quick to prompt to every sacrifice in the cause of his truth and his Church; and it renders all such sacrifices, even when carried to the extent of suffering and death, unreluctant and cheerful. It chooses God as the chief good of the soul, the enjoyment of which assures its perfect and eternal interest and happiness. "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee," is the language of every heart, when its love of God is true in principle and supreme in degree.

If, then, the will of God is the perfect rule of morals; and if supreme and perfect love to God must produce a prompt, an unwearied, a delightful subjection to his will, or rather, an entire and most free choice of it as the rule of all our principles, affections, and actions; the importance of this affection in securing that obedience to the law of God in which true morality consists, is manifest; and we clearly perceive the reason why an inspired writer has affirmed, that "love is the fulfilling of the law." The necessity of keeping this subject before us under those views in which it is placed in the Christian system, and of not surrendering it to mere philosophy, is, however, an important consideration. With the philosopher the love of God may be the mere approval of the intellect; or a sentiment which results from the contemplation of infinite perfection, manifesting itself in acts of power and goodness. In the Scriptures it is much more than either, and is produced and maintained by a different process. We are there taught that "the carnal mind is enmity to God;" and is not of course capable of loving God. Yet this carnal mind may consist with deep attainments in philosophy, and with strongly impassioned poetic sentiment. The mere approval of the understanding; and the susceptibility of being impressed with feelings of admiration, awe, and even pleasure, when the character of God is manifested in his works, as both may be found in the carnal mind which is enmity to God, are not therefore the love of God. They are principles which enter into that love, since it cannot exist without them; but they may exist without this affection itself, and be found in a vicious and unchanged nature. The love of God is a fruit of the Holy Spirit; that is, it is implanted by him only in the souls which he has regenerated; and, as that which excites

its exercise is chiefly, and in the first place, a sense of the benefits bestowed by the grace of God in our redemption, and a well-grounded persuasion of our personal interest in those benefits, it necessarily presupposes our personal reconciliation to God through faith in the atonement of Christ, and that attestation of it to the heart by the Spirit of adoption of which we have before spoken. We here see, then, another proof of the necessary connection of Christian morals with Christian doctrine, and how imperfect and deceptive every system must be which separates them. Love is essential to true obedience; for when the apostle declares love to be "the fulfilling of the law," he declares, in effect, that the law cannot be fulfilled without love; and that every action which has not this for its principle, however virtuous in its show, fails of accomplishing the precepts which are obligatory upon us. But this love to God cannot be felt so long as we are sensible of his wrath, and are in dread of his judgments. These feelings are incompatible with each other, and we must be assured of his reconciliation to us, before we are capable of loving him. Thus the very existence of the love of God implies the doctrines of the atonement, repentance, faith, and the gift of the Spirit of adoption to believers; and unless it be taught in this connection, and through this process of experience, it will be exhibited only as a bright and beauteous object to which man has no access; or a fictitious and imitative sentimentalism will be substituted for it, to the delusion of the souls of men.

A third leading duty is,

Trust in God. All creatures are dependent upon God for being and for well being. Inanimate and irrational beings hold their existence and the benefits which may accompany it, independently of any conditions to be performed on their part. Rational creatures are placed under another rule, and their felicity rests only upon their obedience. Whether, as to those intelligences who have never sinned, specific exercises of trust are required as a duty comprehended in their general obedience, we know not. But as to men, the whole Scripture shows that faith or trust is a duty of the first class, and that they "must live by faith." Whether the reason of this may be the importance to them of being continually impressed with their dependence upon God, so that they may fix it in them at all times, and excite the continual exercise of self confidence and creature reliance; or that as all good normally comes from God, it ought to be recognized as its source, so that all creatures may glorify him; or whether other and more secret reasons may also be assigned, the fact that the duty is enjoined is an essential part of true religion, cannot be doubted. We can see the connection of this mode of devotion, resulting in God with the peace of mind so necessary. We have so many proofs of the weakness and of our insufficiency and perverse powers, and our dependence on Jesus in the

influence of combinations of circumstances which we cannot control, and of accidents which we cannot resist, that, unless we had assurances of being guided, upheld, and defended by a Supreme Power, we might become, and that not unreasonably, a prey to constant apprehensions, and the sport of the most saddening anticipations of the imagination Our sole remedy from these would, in fact, only be found in insensibility and thoughtlessness; for to a reflecting and awakened mind, nothing can shut out uneasy fears but faith in God. In all ages therefore this has been the resource of devout men: "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble; therefore will we not fear," &c, Psalm xlvi, 1. "Our fathers trusted in thee, and thou didst deliver them; they cried unto thee, and were delivered; they trusted in thee and were not confounded." And from our Lord's sermon on the mount it is clear, that one end of his teaching was to deliver men from the piercing anxieties which the perplexities of this life are apt to produce, by encouraging them to confide in the care and bounty of their "heavenly Father."

Our trust in God is enjoined in as many respects as he has been pleased to give us assurances of help, and promises of favour, in his own word. Beyond that, trust would be presumption, as not having authority; and to the full extent in which his gracious purposes toward us are manifested, it becomes a duty. And here too the same connection of this duty with the leading doctrines of our redemption, which we have remarked under the last particular, also displays itself. If morals be taught independent of religion, either affiance in God must be excluded from the list of duties toward God, or otherwise it will be inculcated without effect. A man who is conscious of unremitted sins, and who must therefore regard the administration of the Ruler of the world, as to him punitive and vengeful, can find no ground on which to rest his trust. All that he can do is to hope that his relations to this Being may in future become more favourable; but, for the present, his fears must prevent the exercise of his faith. What course then lies before him, but in the first instance to seek the restoration of the favour of his offended God, in that method which he has prescribed, namely, by repentance toward God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ? Till a Scriptural assurance is obtained of that change in his relations to God which is effected by the free and gracious act of forgiveness, all the reasons of general trust in the care, benediction, and guidance of God, are vain as to him, because they are not applicable to his case. But when friendship is restored between the parties, faith, however unlimited, has the highest reason. It is then "a sure confidence in the mercy of God through Christ," as that mercy manifests itself in all the promises which God has been pleased to make to his children, and in all those condescending relations with which he has been pleased to

invest himself, that under such manifestations he might win and secure our reliance. It is then the confidence not merely of creatures in a beneficent Creator, or of subjects in a gracious Sovereign, but of children in a Parent. It respects the supply of every want, temporal and eternal; the wise and gracious ordering of our concerns; the warding off, or the mitigation of calamities and afflictions; our preservation from all that can *upon the whole* be injurious to us; our guidance through life; our hope in death; and our future felicity in another world. This trust is a *duty* because it is a subject of command; and also because, after such demonstrations of kindness, distrust would imply a dishonourable denial of the love and faithfulness of God, and often also a criminal dependence upon the creature. It is a habit essential to piety. On that condition we "obtain promises," by making them the subjects of prayer; by its influence anxieties destructive to that calm contemplative habit of which true religion is both the offspring and the nurse, are expelled from the heart; a spiritual character is thus given to man, who walks as seeing "Him who is invisible;" and a noble and cheerful courage is infused into the soul, which elevates it above all cowardly shrinking from difficulty, suffering, pain, and death, and affords a practical exemplification of the exhortation of one who had tried the value of this grace in a great variety of exigencies: "Wait upon the Lord, be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart; wait, I say, upon the Lord."

The fear of God is associated with love, and trust, in every part of Holy Scripture; and is enjoined upon us as another of our leading duties.

This, however, is not a servile passion; for then it could not consist with love to God, and with delight and affiance in him. It is true that "the fear which hath torment;" that which is accompanied with painful apprehensions of his displeasure arising from a just conviction of our personal liability to it, is enjoined upon the careless and the impious. To produce this, the word of God fulminates in threatenings, and his judgments march through the earth exhibiting terrible examples of vengeance against one nation or individual for the admonition of others. But that fear of God which arises from apprehension of personal punishment, is not designed to be the habit of the mind; nor is it included in the frequent phrase, "the fear of the Lord," when that is used to express the whole of practical religion, or its leading principles. In that case its nature is, in part, expressed by the term "reverence," which is a due and humbling sense of the Divine majesty, produced and maintained in a mind regenerated by the Holy Spirit, by devout meditations upon the perfections of his infinite nature, his eternity and omniscience, his constant presence with us in every place, the depths of his counsels, the might of his power, the holiness, truth, and justice of his moral cha-

racter; and on the manifestations of these glories in the works of that mighty visible nature with which we are surrounded, in the government of angels, devils, and men, and in the revelations of his inspired word.

With this deeply reverential awe of God, is, however, constantly joined in Scripture, a persuasion of our *conditional* liability to his displeasure. For since all who have obtained his mercy and favour by Christ, receive those blessings through an atonement, which itself demonstrates that we are under a righteous administration, and that neither is the law of God repealed, nor does his justice sleep; and farther, since the saving benefits of that atonement are conditional, and we ourselves have the power to turn aside the benefit of its interposition from us, or to forfeit it when once received, in whole or in part, it is clear that while there is a full provision for our deliverance from the "spirit of bondage unto fear;" there is sufficient reason why we ought to be so impressed with our spiritual dangers, as to produce in us that cautionary fear of the holiness, justice, and power of God, which shall deter us from offending, and lead us often to view, with a restraining and salutary dread, those consequences of unfaithfulness and disobedience to which, at least while we remain on earth, we are liable. Powerful, therefore, as are the reasons by which the Scriptural revelation of the mercy and benevolence of God enforces a firm affiance in him, it exhorts us not to be "high-minded," but to "fear;" to "fear" lest we "come short" of the "promise" of entering "into his rest;" to be in "the fear of the Lord all the day long;" and to pass the whole time of our "sojourning" here "in fear."

This Scriptural view of the fear of God, as combining both reverence of the Divine majesty, and a suitable apprehension of our *conditional* liability to his displeasure, is of large practical influence.

It restrains our faith from degenerating into presumption; our love into familiarity; our joy into carelessness. It nurtures humility, watchfulness, and the spirit of prayer. It induces a reverent habit of thinking and speaking of God, and gives solemnity to the exercises of devotion. It presents sin to us under its true aspect, as dangerous, as well as corrupting to the soul; as darkening our prospects in a future life, as well as injurious to our peace in the present; and it gives strength and efficacy to that most important practical moral principle, the constant reference of our inward habits of thought and feeling, and our outward actions, to the approbation of God.

Upon these internal principles that moral habit and state, which is often expressed by the term HOLINESS, rests. Separate from these principles, it can only consist in visible acts, imperfect in themselves, because not vital, and however commended by men, abominable to God who trieth the heart. But when such acts proceed from these sources, they

are proportioned to the strength and purity of the principle which originates them, except as in some cases they may be influenced and deteriorated by an uninformed or weak judgment. An entire submission to God; a "perfect love" to him; firm affiance in his covenant engagements; and that fear which abases the spirit before God, and departs even from "the appearance of evil," when joined with a right understanding of the word of God, render "the man of God perfect," and "thoroughly furnish him to every good work."

Beside these inward principles and affections, there are, however, several other habits and acts, a public performance of which, as well as their more secret exercises, have been termed by divines our EXTERNAL DUTIES toward God; the term "external" being, however, so used as not to exclude those exercises of the heart from which they must all spring if acceptable to God. The first is,

PRAYER, which is a solemn addressing of our minds to God, as the Fountain of being and happiness, the Ruler of the world, and the Father of the family of man. It includes in it the acknowledgment of the Divine perfections and sovereignty; thankfulness for the mercies we have received; penitential confession of our sins; and an earnest entreaty of blessings, both for ourselves and others. When vocal it is an external act, but supposes the correspondence of the will and affection; yet it may be purely mental, all the acts of which it is composed being often conceived in the mind, when not clothed in words.

That the practice of prayer is enjoined upon us in Scripture, is sufficiently proved by a few quotations: "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened," Matt. vii, 7. "Watch ye therefore and pray always," Luke xxi, 36. "Be careful for nothing; but, in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God," Phil. iv, 6. "Pray without ceasing," 1 Thess. v, 17. That prayer necessarily includes earnestness, and that perseverance which is inspired by strong desire, is evident from the Jews being so severely reproved for "drawing near to God with their lips, while their *hearts* were far from him:"—from the general rule of our Lord laid down in his conversation with the woman of Sychar: "God is a Spirit; and they that worship him, must worship him in *spirit* and in *truth*," John iv, 24,—and, from Romans xii, 12, "Continuing instant in prayer." Here the term, προσκαρτερουντες, is very energetic, and denotes, as Chrysostom observes, "fervent, persevering, and earnest prayer." Our Lord also delivered a parable to teach us that we ought "to pray and not faint;" and we have examples of the success of reiterating our petitions, when for some time they appear disregarded. One of these is afforded in the case of the woman of Canaan, a first and a second time repulsed by our Lord; and another occurs in 2 Cor. xii, 8, 9, "For this I besought the Lord *thrice* that it

might depart from me; and he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee," &c. This passage also affords an instance of praying distinctly for particular blessings, a practice which accords also with the direction in Phil. iv, 6, to make our "requests known unto God," which includes not only our desires for good generally; but also those particular requests which are suggested by special circumstances. Directions to pray for national and public blessings occur in Psalm cxxii, 6, "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem, they shall prosper that love thee:" in Zech. x, 1, "Ask ye of the Lord rain in the time of the latter rain; so the Lord shall make bright clouds," (or lightnings,) "and give them showers of rain, to every one grass in the field:" in 1 Tim. ii, 1–3, "I exhort therefore that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; for kings, and for all that are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty; for this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour," &c. More particular intercession for others is also authorized and enjoined: "Peter was therefore kept in prison; but prayer was made without ceasing of the Church unto God for him," Acts xii, 5. "Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me; that I may be delivered from them that do not believe in Judea," &c, Rom. xv, 30. "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed," James v, 16.

It follows, therefore, from these Scriptural passages, that prayer is a duty; that it is made a condition of our receiving good at the hand of God; that every case of personal pressure, or need, may be made the subject of prayer; that we are to intercede for all immediately connected with us, for the Church, for our country, and for all mankind; that both temporal and spiritual blessings may be the subject of our supplications; and that these great and solemn exercises are to be accompanied with grateful thanksgivings to God as the author of all blessings already bestowed, and the benevolent object of our hope as to future interpositions and supplies. Prayer, in its particular Christian view, is briefly and well defined in the Westminster Catechism,—"Prayer is the offering of our desires to God for things agreeable to his will, in the name of Christ, with confession of our sins, and a thankful acknowledgment of his mercies."

The REASON on which this great and efficacious duty rests has been a subject of some debate. On this point, however, we have nothing explicitly stated in the Scriptures. From them we learn only, that God has appointed it; that he enjoins it to be offered in faith, that is, faith in Christ, whose atonement is the meritorious and procuring cause of all the blessings to which our desires can be directed; and that prayer so

offered is an indispensable condition of our obtaining the blessings for which we ask. As a matter of inference, however, we may discover some glimpses of the reason in the Divine mind on which its appointment rests. That reason has sometimes been said to be the moral preparation and state of fitness produced in the soul for the reception of the Divine mercies which the act, and, more especially, the habit of prayer, must induce. Against this stands the strong and, in a Scriptural view, the fatal objection, that an efficiency is thus ascribed to the mere act of a creature to produce those great, and in many respects, radical changes in the character of man, which we are taught, by inspired authority, to refer to the direct influences of the Holy Spirit. What is it that fits man for forgiveness, but simply repentance? Yet that is expressly said to be the "*gift*" of Christ, and supposes strong operations of the illuminating and convincing Spirit of truth, the Lord and Giver of spiritual life; and if the mere acts and habit of prayer had efficiency enough to produce a Scriptural repentance, then every formalist, attending with ordinary seriousness to his devotions, must, in consequence, become a penitent. Again, if we pray for spiritual blessings aright, that is, with an earnestness of desire which arises from a due apprehension of their importance, and a preference of them to all earthly good, who does not see that this implies such a deliverance from the earthly and carnal disposition which characterizes our degenerate nature, that an agency far above our own, however we may employ it, must be supposed; or else, if our own prayers could be efficient up to this point, we might, by the continual application of this instrument, complete our regeneration, independent of that grace of God, which, after all, this theory brings in. It may indeed be said that the grace of God operates by our prayers to produce in us a state of moral fitness to receive the blessings we ask. But this gives up the point contended for, the moral efficiency of prayer; and refers the efficiency to another agent working by our prayers as an instrument. Still, however, it may be affirmed, that the Scriptures nowhere represent prayer as an instrument for improving our moral state, though in the hands of Divine grace, in any other way than as the means of bringing into the soul new supplies of spiritual life and strength. It is therefore more properly to be considered as a condition of our obtaining that grace by which such effects are wrought, than as the instrument by which it effects them. In fact, all genuine acts of prayer depend upon a grace previously bestowed, and from which alone the disposition and the power to pray proceed. So it was said of Saul of Tarsus, "Behold he prayeth!" He prayed in fact then for the first time; but that was in consequence of the illumination of his mind as to his spiritual danger effected by the miracle on the way to Damascus, and the grace of God which accompanied the miracle. Nor does the miraculous character of the means by which

conviction was produced in his mind, affect the relevancy of this to ordinary cases. By whatever means God may be pleased to fasten the conviction of our spiritual danger upon our minds, and to awaken us out of the long sleep of sin, that conviction must precede real prayer, and comes from the influence of his grace, rendering the means of conviction effectual. Thus it is not the prayer which produces the conviction, but the conviction which gives birth to the prayer; and if we pursue the matter into its subsequent stages, we shall come to the same result. We pray for what we feel we want; that is, for something not in our possession; we obtain this either by impartation from God, to whom we look up as the only Being able to bestow the good for which we ask him; or else we obtain it, according to this theory, by some moral efficiency being given to the exercise of praying to work it in us. Now, the latter hypothesis is in many cases manifestly absurd. We ask for pardon of sin, for instance; but that is an act of God done *for* us, quite distinct from any moral change which prayer may be said to produce in us, whatever efficiency we may ascribe to it; for no such change in us can be pardon, since that must proceed from the party offended. We ask for increase of spiritual strength; and prayer is the expression of that want. But if it supply this want by its own moral efficiency, it must supply it in proportion to its intensity and earnestness; which intensity and earnestness can only be called forth by the degree in which the want is felt, so that the case supposed is contradictory and absurd, as it makes the sense of want to be in proportion to the supply which ought to abate or remove it. And if it be urged, that prayer at least produces in us a fitness for the supply of spiritual strength, because it is excited by a sense of our wants, the answer is, that the fitness contended for consists in that sense of want itself, which must be produced in us by the *previous* agency of grace, or we should never pray for supplies. There is, in fact, nothing in prayer simply which appears to have any adaptation, as an *instrument*, to effect a moral change in man, although it should be supposed to be made use of by the influence of the Holy Spirit. The word of God is properly an instrument, because it contains the doctrine which that Spirit explains and applies, and the motives to faith and obedience which he enforces upon the conscience and affections; and though prayer brings these truths and motives before us, prayer cannot properly be said to be an instrument of our regeneration, because that which is thus brought by prayer to bear upon our case is the word of God itself introduced into our prayers, which derive their sole influence in that respect from that circumstance. Prayer simply is the application of an insufficient to a sufficient Being for the good which the former cannot otherwise obtain, and which the latter only can supply; and as that supply is dependent upon prayer, and in the nature of the thing consequent, prayer can in no good sense be said to be the

instrument of supplying our wants, or fitting us for their supply, except relatively, as a mere condition appointed by the donor.

If we must inquire into the reason of the appointment of prayer, and it can scarcely be considered as a purely arbitrary institution, that reason seems to be, the preservation in the minds of men of a solemn and impressive sense of God's agency in the world, and the dependence of all creatures upon him. Perfectly pure and glorified beings, no longer in a state of probation, and therefore exposed to no temptations, may not need this institution; but men in their fallen state are constantly prone to forget God; to rest in the agency of second causes; and to build upon a sufficiency in themselves. This is at once a denial to God of the glory which he rightly claims, and a destructive delusion to creatures, who, in forsaking God as the object of their constant affiance, trust but in broken reeds, and attempt to drink from "broken cisterns which can hold no water." It is then equally in mercy to us, as in respect to his own honour and acknowledgment, that the Divine Being has suspended so many of his blessings, and those of the highest necessity to us, upon the exercise of prayer; an act which acknowledges his uncontrollable agency, and the dependence of all creatures upon him; our insufficiency, and his fulness; and lays the foundation of that habit of gratitude and thanksgiving, which is at once so ameliorating to our own feelings, and so conducive to a cheerful obedience to the will of God. And if this reason for the injunction of prayer is nowhere in Scripture stated in so many words, it is a principle uniformly supposed as the foundation of the whole scheme of religion which they have revealed.

To this duty objections have been sometimes offered, at which it may be well at least to glance.

One has been grounded upon a supposed predestination of all things which come to pass; and the argument is, that as this established predetermination of all things cannot be altered, prayer, which supposes that God will depart from it, is vain and useless. The answer which a pious predestinarian would give to this objection is, That the argument drawn from the predestination of God lies with the same force against every other human effort, as against prayer; and that as God's predetermination to give food to man does not render the cultivation of the earth useless and impertinent, so neither does the predestination of things shut out the necessity and efficacy of prayer. It would also be urged, that God has ordained the means as well as the end; and although he is an unchangeable Being, it is a part of the unchangeable system which he has established, that prayer shall be heard and accepted.

Those who have not these views of predestination will answer the objection differently; for if the premises of such a predestination as is assumed by the objection, and conceded in the answer, be allowed, the answer is unsatisfactory. The Scriptures represent God, for instance,

as *purposing* to inflict a judgment upon an individual or a nation, which purpose is often changed by prayer. In this case either God's purpose must be denied, and then his threatenings are reduced to words without meaning; or the purpose must be allowed, in which case either prayer breaks in upon predestination, if understood absolutely, or it is vain and useless. To the objection so drawn out it is clear that no answer is given by saying that the means as well as the end are predestinated, since prayer in such cases is not a means to the end, but an instrument of thwarting it; or is a means to one end in opposition to another end, which, if equally predestinated with the same absoluteness, is a contradiction.

The true answer is, that although God has absolutely predetermined some things, there are others, which respect his government of free and accountable agents, which he has but conditionally predetermined.—The true immutability of God we have already showed, (part ii, chap. 28,) consists, not in his adherence to his *purposes*, but in his never changing the *principles* of his administration; and he may therefore in perfect accordance with his preordination of things, and the immutability of his nature, purpose to do, under certain conditions dependent upon the free agency of man, what he will not do under others; and for this reason, that an immutable adherence to the *principles* of a wise, just, and gracious government, requires it. Prayer is in Scripture made one of these conditions; and if God has established it as one of the principles of his moral government to accept prayer, in every case in which he has given us authority to ask, he has not, we may be assured, entangled his actual government of the world with the bonds of such an eternal predestination of particular events, as either to reduce prayer to a mere form of words, or not to be able himself, consistently with his decrees, to answer it, whenever it is encouraged by his express engagements.

A second objection is, that as God is infinitely wise and good, his wisdom and justice will lead him to bestow "whatever is fit for us without praying; and if any thing be not fit for us, we cannot obtain it by praying." To this Dr. Paley very well replies, (*Moral Philosophy*,) "That it may be agreeable to perfect wisdom to grant that to our prayers which it would not have been agreeable to the same wisdom to have given us without praying for." This, independent of the question of the authority of the Scriptures which explicitly enjoin prayer, is the best answer which can be given to the objection; and it is no small confirmation of it, that it is obvious to every reflecting man, that for God to withhold favours till asked for, "tends," as the same writer observes, "to encourage devotion among his rational creatures, and to keep up and circulate a knowledge and sense of their dependency upon HIM."

But it is urged, "God will always do what is *best* from the moral rfection of his nature, whether we pray or not." This objection, wever, supposes, that there is but one mode of acting for the best, d that the Divine will is necessarily determined to that mode only. both which positions," says Paley, "presume a knowledge of univer- l nature, much beyond what we are capable of attaining." It is, deed, a very unsatisfactory mode of speaking, to say, God will always what is best; since we can conceive him capable in all cases of ing what is still better for the creature, and also that the creature is pable of receiving more and more from his infinite fulness for ever. ll that can be rationally meant by such a phrase is, that in the *circum-* nces of the case, God will always do what is most consistent with his n wisdom, holiness, and goodness; but then the disposition to pray, d the act of praying, add a new circumstance to every case, and en bring many other new circumstances along with them. It sup- es humility, contrition, and trust, on the part of the creature; and an knowledgment of the power and compassion of God, and of the merit the atonement of Christ: all which are manifestly new positions, so speak, of the circumstances of the creature, which, upon the very inciple of the objection, rationally understood, must be taken into nsideration.

But if the efficacy of prayer as to ourselves be granted, its influence on the case of others is said to be more difficult to conceive. This y be allowed without at all affecting the duty. Those who bow to authority of the Scriptures will see, that the duty of praying for rselves and for others rests upon the same Divine appointment; and those who ask for the reason of such intercession in behalf of others, is sufficient to reply, that the efficacy of prayer being established in e case, there is the same reason to conclude that our prayers may nefit others, as any other effort we may use. It can only be by vine appointment that one creature is made dependent upon another any advantage, since it was doubtless in the power of the Creator to ve rendered each independent of all but himself. Whatever, reason, refore, might lead him to connect and interweave interests of the e man with the benevolence of another, will be the leading reason for t kind of mutual dependence which is implied in the benefit of mutual yer. Were it only that a previous sympathy, charity, and good ll, are implied in the duty, and must, indeed, be cultivated in order it, and be strengthened by it, the wisdom and benevolence of the titution would, it is presumed, be apparent to every well constituted nd. That all prayer for others must proceed upon a less perfect owledge of them than we have of ourselves, is certain: that all our titions must be, even in our own mind, more conditional than those ich respect ourselves, though many of these must be subjected to the

principles of a general administration, which we but partially apprehend; and that all spiritual influences upon others, when they are the subject of our prayers, will be understood by us as liable to the control of their free agency, must also be conceded; and, therefore, when others are concerned, our prayers may often be partially or wholly fruitless. He who believes the Scriptures will, however, be encouraged by the declaration, that "the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man," for his fellow creatures, "availeth *much*;" and he who demands something beyond mere authoritative declaration, as he cannot deny that prayer is one of those instruments by which another may be benefited, must acknowledge that, like the giving of counsel, it may be of great utility in some cases, although it should fail in others; and that as no man can tell how much good counsel may influence another, or in many cases say whether it has ultimately failed or not, so it is with prayer. It is a part of the Divine plan, as revealed in his word, to give many blessings to man independent of his own prayers, leaving the subsequent improvement of them to himself. They are given in honour of the intercession of Christ, man's great "Advocate;" and they are given, subordinately, in acceptance of the prayers of Christ's Church, and of righteous individuals. And when many, or few, devout individuals become thus the instruments of good to communities, or to whole nations, there is no greater mystery in this than in the obvious fact, that the happiness or misery of large masses of mankind is often greatly affected by the wisdom or the errors, the skill or the incompetence, the good or the bad conduct of a few persons, and often of one.

The general duty of prayer is usually distributed into four branches, —*Ejaculatory*, *private*, *social*, and *public*; each of which is of such importance as to require a separate consideration.

EJACULATORY PRAYER is the term given to those secret and frequent aspirations of the heart to God for general or particular blessings, by which a just sense of our habitual dependence upon God, and of our wants and dangers, may be expressed, at those intervals when the thoughts can detach themselves from the affairs of life, though but for a moment, while we are still employed in them. It includes, too, all those short and occasional effusions of gratitude, and silent ascriptions of praise, which the remembrance of God's mercies will excite in a devotional spirit, under the same circumstances. Both, however, presuppose what divines have called, "the spirit of prayer," which springs from a sense of our dependence upon God, and is a breathing of the desires after intercourse of thought and affection with him, accompanied with a reverential and encouraging sense of his constant presence with us. The cultivation of this spirit is clearly enjoined upon us as a duty by the Apostle Paul, who exhorts us to "pray without ceasing, and in every thing give thanks;" and also to "set our affections upon things

above;"—exhortations which imply a holy and devotional frame and temper of mind, and not merely acts of prayer performed at intervals. The high and unspeakable advantages of this habit, are, that it induces a watchful and guarded mind; prevents religion from deteriorating into form without life; unites the soul to God, its light and strength; induces continual supplies of Divine influence; and opposes an effectual barrier, by the grace thus acquired, against the encroachments of worldly anxieties, and the force of temptations. The existence of this spirit of prayer and thanksgiving is one of the grand distinctions between nominal and real Christians; and by it the measure of vital and effective Christianity enjoyed by any individual may ordinarily be determined.

Private prayer. This, as a duty, rests upon the examples of good men in Scripture; upon several passages of an injunctive character in the Old Testament; and, in the New, upon the express words of our Lord, which, while they suppose the practice of individual prayer to have been generally acknowledged as obligatory, enjoin that it should be strictly *private*. "But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, (8) and when thou hast shut the door, pray to thy Father which is in secret, and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly." In this respect, also, Christ has himself placed us under the obligation of his own example; the evangelists having been inspired to put on record several instances of his retirement into absolute privacy that he might "pray." The reason for this institution of private devotion appears to have been to incite us to a friendly and confiding intercourse with God in all those particular cases which most concern our feelings and our interests; and it is a most affecting instance of the condescension and sympathy of God, that we are thus allowed to use a freedom with him, in "pouring out our hearts," which we could not do with our best and dearest friends. It is also most worthy of our notice, that when this duty is enjoined upon us by our Lord, he presents the Divine Being before us under a relation most of all adapted to inspire that unlimited confidence with which he would have us to approach him:—"Pray to thy Father which is in secret." Thus is the dread of his omniscience, indicated by his "seeing in secret," and of those other overwhelming attributes which omnipresence and omniscience cannot fail to suggest, mitigated, or only employed to inspire greater freedom, and a stronger affiance.

Family prayer. Paley states the peculiar use of family prayer to consist in its influence upon servants and children, whose attention may be more easily commanded by this than by public worship. "The

(8) Εἰς τὸ ταμιεῖον. Kuinoel observes, that the word "answers to the Hebrew עלית, an upper room set apart for retirement and prayer, among the orientals."

example and authority of a master and father act, also, in this way with greater force; and the ardour of devotion is better supported, and the sympathy more easily propagated through a small assembly, connected by the affections of domestic society, than in the presence of a mixed congregation." There is, doubtless, weight in these remarks; but they are defective, both in not stating the *obligation* of this important duty, and in not fully exhibiting its *advantages*.

The absence of an express precept for family worship has, it is true, been urged against its obligation even by some who have still considered it as a prudential and useful ordinance. But the strict obligation of so important a duty is not to be conceded for a moment, since it so plainly arises out of the very constitution of a family; and is confirmed by the earliest examples of the Church of God. On the first of these points the following observations, from a very able and interesting work, (*Anderson on the Domestic Constitution*,) are of great weight:—

"The disposition of some men, professing Christianity, to ask peremptorily for a *particular precept* in all cases of incumbent moral duty, is one which every Christian would do well to examine; not only that he may never be troubled with it himself, but that he may be at no loss in answering such a man, if he is called to converse with him. The particular duty to which he refers,—say, for example, family worship,—is comparatively of small account. His question itself is indicative not merely of great ignorance; it is symptomatic of the want of religious principle. When a man says that he can *only* be bound to such a duty, a moral duty, by a positive and particular precept, I am satisfied that he could not perform it, in obedience to any precept whatever; nor could he even now, though he were to try. The truth is, that this man has no disposition toward such worship, and he rather requires to be informed of the grounds of all such obligation.

"The duty of family devotion, therefore, let it be remembered, though it had been minutely enjoined as to both substance and season, would not, after all, have been founded only on such injunctions. I want the reader thoroughly to understand the *character* of a Christian, the *constitution* of the family; and out of this character and that constitution, he will find certain duties to arise *necessarily*; that is, they are essential to the continuance and well being of himself as a Christian parent, and of the constitution over which he is set. In this case there can be no question as to their obligation, and for a precept there is no necessity. The Almighty, in his word, has not only said nothing in vain, but nothing except what is necessary. Now, as to family worship, for a particular precept I have no wish; no, not even for the sake of *others*, because I am persuaded that the Christian, in his sober senses, *will* naturally obey and no other *can*.

"To apply, however, this request for a precise precept to some other

branches of family duty:—What would be thought of me, were I to demand an express precept to enforce my obligation to feed my children, and another to oblige me to clothe them? one to express my obligation to teach them the use of letters, and another to secure my training them to lawful or creditable professions or employments? 'All this,' very properly you might reply, 'is absurd in the highest degree; your obligation rests on much higher ground; nay, doth not *nature* itself teach you in this, and much more than this?' 'Very true,' I reply; 'and is *renewed nature*, then, not to teach me far more still? To what other nature are such words as these addressed?—*Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.*'

"Independently, however, of all this evidence with any rational Christian parent, I may confirm and establish his mind on much higher ground than even that which these pointed examples afford. To such a parent I might say, 'Without hesitation, you will admit that your obligations to your family are to be measured now, and on the day of final account, by your *capacity*,—as a man by your natural, as a Christian by your spiritual capacity? and, however you may feel conscious of falling short daily, that you are under obligation to honour God to the utmost limit of this capacity? You will also allow that, standing where you do, you are not now, like a solitary orphan without relatives, to be regarded only as a single individual. God himself, your Creator, your Saviour, and your Judge, regards you as the *head* of a *family*; and, therefore, in possession of a sacred trust; you have the care of souls? Now if you really do measure obligation by capacity, then you will also at once allow, that you must do what you can, that he may, from your family, have as much honour as possible.

"'Without hesitation you will also allow that God daily *preserves* you? And does he not also preserve your family? But if he preserves, he has a right of property in each and all under your roof. Shall he not, therefore, have from you acknowledgment of this? If daily he preserves, shall he not be daily acknowledged? And if acknowledged at all, how ought he to be so, if not upon your knees? And how can they know this if they do not *hear* it?

"'Without hesitation you will also allow that you are a *social* as well as a reasonable being? And often have you, therefore, felt how much the soothing influence of their sweet society has sustained you under your cares and trials, and grief itself. O! surely then, as a social being, you owe to them social worship; nor should you ever forget, that, in ancient days, there *was* social worship here before it could be any where else.'"

The same excellent writer has not, in his subsequent argument, given to the last remark in the above quotation all the force which it demands; for that social worship existed before worship more properly called public, that is worship in indiscriminate assemblies, is the point, which, when followed out, most fully establishes the obligation. A great part, at least, of the worship of the patriarchal times was domestic. The worship of God was observed in the families of Abraham, Jacob, and Job; nay, the highest species of worship, the offering of sacrifices, which it could not have been without Divine appointment. It arose, therefore, out of the original constitution of a family, that the father and natural head was invested with a sacred and religious character, and that with reference to his family; and if this has never been revoked by subsequent prohibition; but on the contrary, if its continuance has been subsequently recognized; then the family priesthood continues in force, and stands on the same ground as several other religious obligations, which have passed from one dispensation of revealed religion to another, without express re-enactment.

Let us then inquire, whether any such revocation of this office, as originally vested in the father of a family, took place after the appointment of a particular order of priests under the Mosaic economy. It is true that *national* sacrifices were offered by the Aaronical priests, and perhaps some of those consuetudinary sacrifices, which, in the patriarchal ages, were offered by the heads of families, and had reference specially to the general dispensation of religion under which every family was equally placed; yet the passover was a solemn religious act, the domestic nature of which is plainly marked, and it was to be an ordinance for ever, and therefore was not taken out of the hands of the heads of families by the institution of the Aaronical priesthood, although the ceremony comprehended several direct acts of worship. The solemn instruction of the family is also in the law of Moses enjoined upon the father, "Thou shalt teach them diligently to thy children;" and he was also directed to teach them the import of the different festivals, and other commemorative institutions. Thus the original relation of the father to his family, which existed in the patriarchal age, is seen still in existence, though changed in some of its circumstances by the law. He is still the religious teacher; still he offers prayers for them to God; and still "blesses,"—an act which imports both prayer, praise, and *official* benediction. So the family of Jesse had a yearly sacrifice, 1 Sam. xx, 6. So David, although not a priest, returned to "bless his household;" and our Lord filled the office of the master of a family, as appears from his eating the passover with his disciples, and presiding as such over the whole rite: and although the passage, "Pour out thy fury upon the heathen, and upon the *families* which call not upon thy name," Jer. x, 25, does not perhaps decidedly refer to acts of domestic

phraseology was influenced by that themselves;—neither did the heathen acknowledge God. Nor is it a trifling practice of a formal and visible domestic nich corrupted the forms of the true reli- the patriarchal dispensation, we see the a public idolatry, as exhibited in their private neir household deities; and the religious cere- mbent upon the head of every house to perform. r and office of the father and master of a house- daism into Christianity; for here, also, we find es and repeals it. A duty so well understood both even heathens, as that the head of the house ought igious character, needed no special injunction. The who believed was baptized, and all his "house;" the ocieties were chiefly domestic; and the antiquity of do- s services among Christians, leaves it unquestionable, that mber of Christians increased so as to require a separate some common room or church, the domestic worship was eded. But for the division of verses in the fourth chapter of le to the Colossians, it would scarcely have been suspected first and second verses contained two distinct and unconnected ts,—"Masters give unto your servants that which is just and , knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven; continue in yer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving;" a collocation of rsons and duties which seems to intimate that the sense of the apostle was, that the "servant," the slave should partake of the benefit of those continual prayers and daily thanksgivings which it is enjoined upon the master to offer.

As the *obligation* to this branch of devotion is passed over by Paley, so the *advantages* of family worship are but very imperfectly stated by him. The offering of prayer to God in a family cannot but lay the ground of a special regard to its interests and concerns on the part of him, who is thus constantly acknowledged; and the advantage, therefore, is more than a mere sentimental one; and more than that of giving effect to the "master's example." The blessings of providence and of grace; defence against evil, or peculiar supports under it, may thus be expected from Him, who has said, "In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths;" and that when two or three are met in his name, he is "in the midst of them." The family is a "Church in a house;" and its ministrations, as they are acceptable to God, cannot but be followed by his direct blessing.

PUBLIC PRAYER, under which we include the assembling of ourselves together for every branch of public worship.

The Scriptural obligation of this is partly founded upon example, and partly upon precept; so that no person who admits that authority, can question this great duty without manifest and criminal inconsistency. The institution of public worship under the law; the practice of synagogue worship among the Jews, from at least the time of Ezra, (9) cannot be questioned; both which were sanctioned by the practice of our Lord and his apostles. The course of the synagogue worship became indeed the model of that of the Christian Church. It consisted in prayer, reading and explaining the Scriptures, and singing of psalms; and thus one of the most important means of instructing nations, and of spreading and maintaining the influence of morals and religion among a people, passed from the Jews into all Christian countries.

The preceptive authority for our regular attendance upon public worship, is either *inferential* or *direct*. The command to publish the Gospel includes the obligation of assembling to hear it; the name by which a Christian society is designated in Scripture, is a *Church;* which signifies an "assembly" for the transaction of some business; and, in the case of a Christian assembly, the business must be necessarily spiritual, and include the sacred exercises of prayer, praise, and hearing the Scriptures. But we have more *direct* precepts, although the practice was obviously continued from Judaism, and was therefore consuetudinary. Some of the epistles of Paul are commanded to be read in the Churches. The singing of psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, is enjoined as an act of solemn worship, "to the Lord;" and St. Paul cautions the Hebrews that they "forsake not the assembling of themselves together." The practice of the primitive age is also manifest from the epistles of St. Paul. The Lord's Supper was celebrated by the body of believers collectively: and this apostle prescribes to the Corinthians regulations for the exercises of prayer and prophesyings, "when they came together in the Church," —the assembly. The statedness and order of these "holy offices" in the primitive Church, appears also from the apostolical epistle of St. Clement: "We ought also, looking into the depths of the Divine knowledge, to do all things in order, whatsoever THE LORD hath *commanded* to be done. We ought to make our oblations, and perform our holy offices, at their appointed seasons; for these he hath *commanded* to be done, not irregularly or by chance, but at determinate times and hours; as he hath likewise *ordained* by his *supreme will*, where, and by what persons, they shall be performed; that so all things being done according to his pleasure, may be acceptable in his sight." This passage is remarkable for urging a Divine authority for the public services of the

(9) Some writers contend that synagogues were as old as the ceremonial law That they were *ancient* is proved from Acts xv, 21,—"Moses *of old time* hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath day."

Church, by which St. Clement, no doubt, means the authority of the inspired directions of the apostles.

The ends of the institution of public worship are of such obvious importance, that it must ever be considered as one of the most condescending and gracious dispensations of God to man. By this his Church confesses his name before the world; by this the public teaching of his word is associated with acts calculated to affect the mind with that solemnity which is the best preparation for hearing it to edification. It is thus that the ignorant and vicious are collected together, and instructed and warned; the invitations of mercy are published to the guilty, and the sorrowful and afflicted are comforted. In these assemblies God, by his Holy Spirit, diffuses his vital and sanctifying influence, and takes the devout into a fellowship with himself, from which they derive strength to do and to suffer his will in the various scenes of life, while he thus affords them a foretaste of the deep and hallowed pleasures which are reserved for them at "his right hand for evermore." Prayers and intercessions are here heard for national and public interests; and while the benefit of these exercises descends upon a country, all are kept sensible of the dependence of every public and personal interest upon God. Praise calls forth the grateful emotions, and gives cheerfulness to piety; and that "instruction in righteousness," which is so perpetually repeated, diffuses the principles of morality and religion throughout society; enlightens and gives activity to conscience; raises the standard of morals; attaches shame to vice, and praise to virtue; and thus exerts a powerfully purifying influence upon mankind. Laws thus receive a force, which, in other circumstances, they could not acquire, even were they enacted in as great perfection; and the administration of justice is aided by the strongest possible obligation and sanction being given to legal oaths. The domestic relations are rendered more strong and interesting by the very habit of the attendance of families upon the sacred services of the sanctuary of the Lord; and the rich and the poor meeting together there, and standing on the same common ground of sinners before God, equally dependent upon him, and equally suing for his mercy, has a powerful, though often an insensible, influence in humbling the pride which is nourished by superior rank, and in raising the lower classes above abjectness of spirit, without injuring their humility. Piety, benevolence, and patriotism, are equally dependent for their purity and vigour upon the regular and devout worship of God in the simplicity of the Christian dispensation.

A few words on liturgies or forms of prayer may here have a proper place.

The necessity of adhering to the simplicity of the first age of the Church, as to worship, need scarcely be defended by argument. If no liberty were intended to be given to accommodate the modes of worship

to the circumstances of different people and times, we should, no doubt, have had some express directory on the subject in Scripture; but in the exercise of this liberty steady regard is to be paid to the spirit and genius and simple character of Christianity, and a respectful deference to the practice of the apostles and their immediate successors. Without these, formality and superstition, to both of which human nature is very liable, are apt to be induced; and when once they enter they increase, as the history of the Church sufficiently shows, indefinitely, until true religion is buried beneath the mass of observances which have been introduced as her aids and handmaids. Our Lord's own words are here directly applicable and important: "God is a Spirit; and they that worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth." The worship must be adapted to the spiritual nature of God, and to his revealed perfections. To such a Being the number of prayers, the quantity of worship so to speak, to which corrupt Churches have attached so much importance, can be of no value. As a Spirit, he seeks the worship of the spirit of man; and regards nothing external in that worship but as it is the expression of those emotions of humility, faith, gratitude, and hope, which are the principles he condescendingly approves in man. "True" worship, we are also taught by these words, is the worship of the heart; it springs from humility, faith, gratitude, and hope; and its final cause, or end, is to better man, by bringing upon his affections the sanctifying and comforting influence of grace. The modes of worship which best promote this end, and most effectually call these principles into exercise, are those therefore which best accord with our Lord's rule: and if in the apostolic age we see this end of worship most directly accomplished, and these emotions most vigorously and with greatest purity excited, the novelties of human invention can add nothing to the effect, and for that very reason have greatly diminished it. In the Latin and Greek Churches we see a striking conformity in the vestments, the processions, the pictures, and images, and other parts of a complex and gorgeous ceremonial, to the Jewish typical worship, and to that of the Gentiles, which was an imitation of it without typical meaning. But it is not even pretended that in these circumstances it is founded upon primitive practice; or, if pretended, this is obviously an impudent assumption.

Liturgies, or forms of *service*, do not certainly come under this censure, except when they contain superstitious acts of devotion to saints, or are so complicated, numerous, and lengthened, that the only principle to which they can be referred is the common, but unworthy notion, that the Divine Being is rendered placable by continued service; or that the wearisome exercise of vocal prayers, continued for long periods, and in painful postures, is a necessary penance to man, and, as such, acceptable to God. In those Reformed Churches of Christendom in which they are used, they have been greatly abridged, as well as puri-

fied from the corruptions of the middle ages. In some they are more copious than in others, while many religious societies have rejected their use altogether; and in a few they are so used as to afford competent space also for extempore devotion.

The advocates and opponents of the use of forms of prayer in public worship have both run into great extremes, and attempted generally to prove too much against each other.

If the use of forms of prayer in prose be objected to, their use in verse ought to be rejected on the same principle; and extemporaneous psalms and hymns must, for consistency's sake, be required of a minister, as well as extemporaneous prayers; or the practice of singing, as a part of God's worship, must be given up. Again: If the objection to the use of a form of prayer be not in its matter; but merely as it contains petitions not composed by ourselves, or by the officiating minister on the occasion; the same objection would lie to our using any petitions found in the Psalms or other devotional parts of Scripture, although adapted to our case, and expressed in words far more fitting than our own. If we think precomposed prayers incompatible with devotion, we make it essential to devotion that we should frame our desires into our own words; whereas nothing can be more plain, than that whoever has composed the words, if they correspond with our desires, they become the prayer of our hearts, and are, as such, acceptable to God. The objection to petitionary forms composed by others, supposes also that we know the things which it is proper for us to ask without the assistance of others. This may be sometimes the case; but as we must be taught what to pray for by the Holy Scriptures, so, in proportion as we understand what we are authorized to pray for by those Scriptures, our prayers become more varied, and distinct, and comprehensive, and, therefore, edifying. But all helps to the understanding of the Scriptures, as to what they encourage us to ask of God, is a help to us in prayer. Thus the exposition of Christian privileges and blessings from the pulpit, affords us this assistance; thus the public extempore prayers we hear offered by ministers and enlightened Christians, assist us in the same respect; and the written and recorded prayers of the wise and pious in different ages, fulfil the same office, and to so great an extent, that scarcely any who offer extempore prayer escape falling into phrases and terms of expression, or even entire petitions, which have been originally derived from liturgies. Even in extempore services, the child accustomed to the modes of precatory expression used by the parent, and the people to those of their ministers, imitate them unconsciously; finding the desires of their hearts already embodied in suitable and impressive words.

The objection, therefore, to the use of forms of prayer, when absolute, is absurd, and involves principles which no one acts upon, or can

act upon. It also disregards example and antiquity. The high priest of the Jews pronounced yearly a form of benediction. The Psalms of David, and other inspired Hebrew poets, whether chanted or read makes no difference, were composed for the use of the sanctuary, and formed a part of the regular devotions of the people. Forms of prayer were used in the synagogue service of the Jews, which, though multiplied in subsequent times, so as to render the service tedious and superstitious, had among them some that were in use between the return from the captivity and the Christian era, and were therefore sanctioned by the practice of our Lord and his apostles. (*Prideaux's Connection.* Fol. edit. vol. i, p. 304.) John Baptist appears also to have given a form of prayer to his disciples, in which he was followed by our Lord. The latter has indeed been questioned, and were it to be argued that our Lord intended that form of prayer alone to be used, too much would be proved by the advocates of forms. On the other hand, although the words, "after this *manner* pray ye," intimate that the Lord's prayer was given as a model of prayer, so the words in another evangelist, "when ye pray, say," as fully indicate an intention to prescribe a form. It seems, therefore, fair, to consider the Lord's prayer as intended both as a *model* and a *form;* and he must be very fastidious who, though he uses it as the model of his own prayers, by paraphrasing its petitions in his own words, should scruple to use it in its native simplicity and force as a form. That its use as a form, though not its exclusive use, was originally intended by our Lord, appears, I think, very clearly, from the disciples desiring to be taught to pray, "as John taught his disciples." If, as it has been alleged, the Jewish rabbins, at so early a period, were in the custom of giving short forms of prayer to their disciples, to be used in the form given, or to be enlarged upon by the pupil at his pleasure, this would fully explain the request of the disciples. However, without laying much stress upon the antiquity of this practice, we may urge, that if John Baptist gave a form of prayer to his followers, the conduct of our Lord in teaching his disciples to pray, by what is manifestly a regularly connected series of petitions, is accordant with their request; but if the Baptist only taught what topics ought to be introduced in prayer, and the disciples of Jesus wished to be instructed in like manner, it is difficult to account for their request being granted, not by his giving directions as to the topics of prayer, but by his uttering a regular prayer itself. That our Lord intended that prayer to be used as adapted to that period of his dispensation; and that the petitions in that form are admirably applicable to every period of Christianity, and may be used profitably; and that its use implies a devout respect to the words of Him "who spake as never man spake;" are points from which there does not appear any reasonable ground of dissent.

The practice of the primitive Church may also be urged in favour of

liturgies. Founded as the early worship of Christians was, upon the model of the synagogue, the use of short forms of prayer, or collects, by them, is at least probable. It must indeed be granted that extended and regular liturgies were of a later date; and that extempore prayers were constantly offered in their assemblies for public worship. This appears clear enough from several passages in St. Paul's epistles, and the writings of the fathers; so that no liturgical service can be so framed as entirely to shut out, or not to leave convenient space for, extempore prayer by the minister without departing from the earliest models. But the Lord's prayer appears to have been in frequent use in the earliest times, and a series of collects; which seems allowed even by Lord King, although he proves that the practice for the minister to pray 'according to his ability," (1) that is, to use his gifts in extempore prayer, was a constant part of the public worship in the first ages.

Much, therefore, is evidently left to wisdom and prudence in a case where we have no explicit direction in the Scriptures; and as a general rule to be modified by circumstances, we may perhaps with safety affirm, that the best mode of public worship is that which unites a brief Scriptural liturgy with extempore prayers by the minister. This will more clearly appear if we consider the exceedingly futile character of those objections which have been reciprocally employed by the opponents and advocates of forms, when they have carried their views to an extreme.

To public liturgies it has been objected, that "forms of prayer composed in one age become unfit for another, by the unavoidable change of language, circumstances, and opinions." To this it may be answered, 1. That whatever weight there may be in the objection, it can only apply to cases where the form is, in all its parts, made imperative upon the officiating minister; or where the Church imposing it, neglects to accommodate the liturgy to meet all such changes, when innocent. 2. That the general language of no form of prayer among ourselves, has become obsolete in point of fact; a few expressions only being, according to modern notions, uncouth, or unusual. 3. That the petitions they contain are suited, more or less, to all men at all times, whatever may be their "circumstances;" and that as to "opinions," if they so change in a Church as to become unscriptural, it is an advantage arising out of a public form, that it is auxiliary to the Scriptures in bearing testimony against them; that a natural reverence for ancient forms tends to preserve their use, after opinions have become lax; and that they are sometimes the means of recovering a Church from error.

Another objection is, that the perpetual repetition of the same form of words produces weariness and inattentiveness in the congregation.

(1) This expression occurs in Justin Martyr's Second Apology, where he particularly describes the mode of primitive worship.

There is some truth in this; but it is often carried much too far. A devotional mind will not weary in the repetition of a Scriptural and well arranged liturgy, if not too long to be sustained by the infirmity of the body. Whether forms are used, or extempore prayer be practised, effort and application of mind are necessary in the hearer to enter into the spirit of the words; and each mode is wearisome to the careless and indevout, though not, we grant, in equal degrees. The objection, as far as it has any weight, would be reduced to nothing, were the liturgy repeated only at one service on the Sabbath, so that at the others the minister might be left at liberty to pray with more direct reference to the special circumstances of the people, the Church, and the world.

The *general* character which all forms of prayer must take, is a third objection; but this is not true absolutely of any liturgy, and much less of that of the Church of England. All prayer must, and ought to be, general, because we ask for blessings which all others need as much as ourselves; but that particularity which goes into the different parts of a Christian's religious experience and conflicts, dangers and duties, is found very forcibly and feelingly expressed in that liturgy. That greater particularity is often needed than this excellent form of prayer contains, must, however, be allowed; and this, as well as prayer suited to occasional circumstances, might be supplied by the more frequent use of extempore prayer, without displacing the liturgy itself. The objection, therefore, has no force, except when extempore prayer is excluded, or confined within too narrow a limit.

On the other hand, the indiscriminate advocates of liturgies have carried their objections to extempore prayer to a very absurd extreme. Without a liturgy the folly and enthusiasm of many, they say, is in danger of producing extravagant or impious addresses to God; that a congregation is confused between their attention to the minister, and their own devotion, being ignorant of each petition before they hear it; and to this they add the labouring recollection or tumultuous delivery of many extempore speakers. The first and third of these objections can have force only where foolish, enthusiastic, and incompetent ministers are employed; and so the evil, which can but rarely exist, is easily remedied. The second objection lay as forcibly against the inspired prayers of the Scriptures at the time they were first uttered, as against extempore prayers now; and it would lie against the use of the collects, and occasional unfamiliar forms of prayer introduced into the regular liturgy, in the case of all who are not able to read, or who happen not to have prayer books. We may also observe, that if evils of so serious a kind are the necessary results of extempore praying; if devotion is hindered, and pain and confusion of mind produced; and impiety and enthusiasm promoted; it is rather singular that extempore prayer should

have been so constantly practised in the primitive Church, and that it should not have been wholly prohibited to the clergy on all occasions, in later times. The facts, however, of our own age prove that there is, to say the least, an equal degree of devotion, an equal absence of confusedness of thought in the worshippers, where no liturgy is used, as where extempore prayer is unknown. Instances of folly and enthusiasm are also but few in the ministry of such Churches; and when they occur they have a better remedy than entirely to exclude extempore prayers by liturgies, and thus to shut out the great benefits of that mode of worship, for the loss of which no exclusive form of service can atone.

The whole, we think, comes to this,—that there are advantages in each mode of worship; and that, when combined prudently, the public service of the sanctuary has its most perfect constitution. Much, however, in the practice of Churches is to be regulated by due respect to differences of opinion, and even to prejudice, on a point upon which we are left at liberty by the Scriptures, and which must therefore be ranked among things prudential. Here, as in many other things, Christians must give place to each other, and do all things "in charity."

PRAISE AND THANKSGIVING are implied in prayer, and included indeed in our definition of that duty, as given above. But beside those ascriptions of praise and expressions of gratitude, which are to be mingled with the precatory part of our devotions, solemn psalms and hymns of praise, to be sung with the voice, and accompanied with the melody of the heart, are of apostolic injunction, and form an important and exhilarating part of the worship of God, whether public or social. It is thus that God is publicly acknowledged as the great source of all good, and the end to which all good ought again to tend in love and obedience; and the practice of stirring up our hearts to a thankful remembrance of his goodness, is equally important in its moral influence upon our feelings now, and as it tends to prepare us for our eternal enjoyment hereafter. "Prayer," says a divine of the English Church, "awakens in us a sorrowful sense of wants and imperfections, and confession induces a sad remembrance of our guilt and miscarriages; but thanksgiving has nothing in it but a warm sense of the mightiest love, and the most endearing goodness, as it is the overflow of a heart full of love, the free sally and emission of soul, that is captivated and endeared by kindness. To laud and magnify the Lord is the end for which we were born, and the heaven for which we were designed; and when we are arrived to such a vigorous sense of Divine love as the blessed inhabitants of heaven have attained, we shall need no other pleasure or enjoyment to make us for ever happy, but only to sing eternal praises to God and the Lamb; the vigorous relish of whose unspeakable goodness to us will so inflame our love, and animate our gratitude, that to

eternal ages we shall never be able to refrain from breaking out into new songs of praise, and then every new song will create a new pleasure, and every new pleasure create a new song." (*Dr. Scott.*)

CHAPTER III.

The Duties we owe to God—The Lord's Day.

As we have just been treating of the public worship of Almighty God, so we may fitly add some remarks upon the consecration of one day in seven for that service, that it may be longer continued than on days in which the business of life calls for our exertions, and our minds be kept free from its distractions.

The obligation of a Sabbatical institution upon Christians, as well as the extent of it, have been the subjects of much controversy. Christian Churches themselves have differed; and the theologians of the same Church. Much has been written upon the subject on each side, and much research and learning employed, sometimes to darken a very plain subject.

The circumstance, that the observance of a Sabbath is nowhere, in *so many words*, enjoined upon Christians, by our Lord and his apostles, has been assumed as the reason for so great a license of criticism and argument as that which has been often indulged in to unsettle the strictness of the obligation of this duty. Its obligation has been represented as standing upon the ground of inference only, and therefore of human opinion; and thus the opinion against Sabbatical institutions has been held up as equally weighty with the opinion in their favour; and the liberty which has been claimed, has been too often hastily concluded to be Christian liberty. This, however, is travelling much too fast; for if the case were as much a matter of inference, as such persons would have it, it does not follow that every inference is alike good; or that the opposing inferences have an equal force of truth, any more than of piety.

The question respects the will of God as to this particular point,—whether one day in seven is to be wholly devoted to religion, exclusive of worldly business and worldly pleasures? Now, there are but two ways in which the will of God can be collected from his word; either by some explicit injunction upon all, or by incidental circumstances. Let us then allow for a moment, that we have no such explicit injunction; yet we have certainly none to the contrary: let us allow that we have only for our guidance in inferring the will of God in this particular, certain circumstances declarative of his will; yet this important conclusion is inevitable, that all such indicative circumstances are in favour of a

Sabbatical institution, and that there is not one which exhibits any thing contrary to it. The seventh day was hallowed at the close of the creation; its sanctity was afterward marked by the withholding of the manna on that day, and the provision of a double supply on the sixth, and that *previous* to the giving of the law from Sinai: it was then made a part of that great epitome of religious and moral duty, which God wrote with his own finger on tables of stone; it was a part of the public political law of the only people to whom Almighty God ever made himself a political head and ruler; its observance is connected throughout the prophetic age with the highest promises, its violations with the severest maledictions; it was among the Jews in our Lord's time a day of solemn religious assembling, and was so observed by him; when changed to the first day of the week, it was the day on which the first Christians assembled; it was called, by way of eminence, "the Lord's day;" and we have inspired authority to say, that, both under the Old and New Testament dispensations, it is used as an expressive type of the heavenly and eternal rest. Now, against all these circumstances so strongly declarative of the will of God, as to the observance of a Sabbatical institution, what circumstance or passage of Scripture can be opposed, as bearing upon it a contrary indication? Truly not one; except those passages in St. Paul in which he speaks of Jewish Sabbaths, with their Levitical rites, and of a distinction of days, both of which marked a weak or a criminal adherence to the abolished ceremonial dispensation; but which touch not the Sabbath as a branch of the moral law, or as it was changed, by the authority of the apostles, to the first day of the week.

If, then, we were left to determine the point by inference merely, how powerful is the inference as to what is the will of God with respect to the keeping of the Sabbath on the one hand, and how totally unsupported is the opposite inference on the other!

It may also be observed, that those who will so strenuously insist upon the absence of an express command as to the Sabbath in the writings of the evangelists and apostles, as explicit as that of the decalogue, assume, that the will of God is only obligatory when manifested in some one mode, which *they* judge to be most fit. But this is a monstrous hypothesis; for however the will of God may be manifested, if it is with such clearness as to exclude all reasonable doubt, it is equally obligatory as when it assumes the formality of legal promulgation. Thus the Bible is not all in the form of express and authoritative command; it teaches by examples, by proverbs, by songs, by incidental allusions and occurrences; and yet is, throughout, a manifestation of the will of God as to morals and religion in their various branches, and if disregarded, it will be so at every man's peril.

But strong as this ground is, we quit it for a still stronger. It is wholly a mistake that the Sabbath, because not re-enacted with the

formality of the decalogue, is not explicitly enjoined upon Christians, and that the testimony of Scripture to such an injunction is not unequivocal and irrefragable. We shall soon prove that the Sabbath was appointed at the creation of the world, and consequently for all men, and therefore for Christians; since there was never any repeal of the original institution. To this we add, that if the moral law be the law of Christians, then is the Sabbath as explicitly enjoined upon them as upon the Jews. But that the moral law is our law, as well as the law of the Jews, all but Antinomians must acknowledge; and few, we suppose, will be inclined to run into the fearful mazes of that error, in order to support lax notions as to the obligation of the Sabbath, into which, however, they must be plunged, if they deny the law of the decalogue to be binding upon us. That it is so bound upon us, a few passages of Scripture will prove as well as many.

Our Lord declares, that he came not to destroy the law and the prophets, but to fulfil. Take it, that by the "law," he meant both the moral and the ceremonial; ceremonial law could only be fulfilled in him, by realizing its types; and moral law, by upholding its authority. For "the prophets," they admit of a similar distinction; they either enjoin morality, or utter prophecies of Christ; the latter of which were fulfilled in the sense of accomplishment, the former by being sanctioned and enforced. That the observance of the Sabbath is a part of the moral law, is clear from its being found in the decalogue, the doctrine of which our Lord sums up in the moral duties of loving God and our neighbour; and for this reason the injunctions of the prophets, on the subject of the Sabbath, are to be regarded as a part of their *moral* teaching. (See this stated more at large, part iii, chap. i.) Some divines have, it is true, called the observance of the Sabbath a positive, and not a moral precept. If it were so, its obligation is precisely the same, in all cases where God himself has not relaxed it; and if a positive precept only, it has surely a special eminence given to it, by being placed in the list of the ten commandments, and being capable, with them, of an epitome which resolves them into the love of God and our neighbour. (See vol. ii, p. 5.) The truth seems to be, that it is a mixed precept, and not wholly positive; but intimately, perhaps essentially, connected with several moral principles, of homage to God, and mercy to men; with the obligation of religious *worship*, of *public* religious worship, and of *undistracted* public worship: and this will account for its collocation in the decalogue with the highest duties of religion, and the leading rules of personal and social morality.

The passage from our Lord's sermon on the mount, with its context, is a sufficiently explicit enforcement of the moral law, generally, upon his followers; but when he says, "The Sabbath was made for man," he clearly refers to its original institution, as a universal law, and not to

its obligation upon the Jews only, in consequence of the enactments of the law of Moses. It "was made for *man*," not as he may be a Jew or a Christian; but as man, a creature bound to love, worship, and obey his God and Maker, and on his trial for eternity.

Another explicit proof that the law of the ten commandments, and, consequently, the law of the Sabbath, is obligatory upon Christians, is found in the answer of the apostle to an objection to the doctrine of justification by faith, Rom. iii, 31, "Do we then make void the law through faith?" which is equivalent to asking, Does Christianity teach, that the law is no longer obligatory on Christians, because it teaches that no man can be justified by it? To this he answers in the most solemn form of expression, "God forbid; yea, we establish the law." Now, the sense in which the apostle uses the term, "the law," in this argument, is indubitably marked in chap. vii, 7, "I had not known sin but by *the law*; for I had not known lust, except *the law* had said, Thou shalt not covet:" which being a plain reference to the tenth command of the decalogue, as plainly shows that the decalogue is "*the law*" of which he speaks. This, then, is the law which is "*established*" by the Gospel; and this can mean nothing else than the establishment and confirmation of its *authority*, as the rule of all inward and outward holiness. Whoever, therefore, denies the obligation of the Sabbath on Christians, denies the obligation of the whole decalogue; and there is no real medium between the acknowledgment of the Divine authority of this sacred institution, as a universal law, and that gross corruption of Christianity, generally designated Antinomianism.

Nor is there any force in the dilemma into which the anti-Sabbatarians would push us, when they argue, that, if the case be so, then are we bound to the same circumstantial exactitude of obedience as to this command, as to the other precepts of the decalogue; and, therefore, that we are bound to observe the seventh day, reckoning from Saturday, as the Sabbath day. But, as the command is partly positive, and partly moral, it may have circumstances which are capable of being altered in perfect accordance with the moral principles on which it rests, and the moral ends which it proposes. Such circumstances are not indeed to be judged of on our own authority. We must either have such general principles for our guidance as have been revealed by God, and cannot therefore be questioned, or some special authority from which there can be no just appeal. Now, though there is not on record any Divine command issued to the apostles, to change the Sabbath from the day on which it was held by the Jews, to the first day of the week; yet, when we see that this was done in the apostolic age, and that St. Paul speaks of the Jewish Sabbaths as not being obligatory upon Christians, while he yet contends that the whole moral law is obligatory upon them; the fair inference is, that this change of the day was made by Divine

direction. It is at least more than inference, that the change was made under the sanction of inspired men; and those men, the appointed rulers in the Church of Christ; whose business it was to "set all things in order," which pertained to its worship and moral government. We may rest well enough, therefore, satisfied with this,—that as a Sabbath is obligatory upon us, we act under apostolic authority for observing it on the first day of the week, and thus commemorate at once the creation and the redemption of the world.

Thus, even if it were conceded, that the change of the day was made by the agreement of the apostles, without express directions from Christ, (which is not probable,) it is certain that it was not done without *express authority* confided to them by Christ; but it would not even follow from this change that they did in reality make any alteration in the law of the Sabbath, either as it stood at the time of its original institution at the close of the creation, or in the decalogue of Moses. The same portion o. time which constituted the seventh day from the creation, could not be observed in all parts of the earth; and it is not probable, therefore, that the original law expresses more, than that a seventh day, or one day in seven, the seventh day after six days of labour, should be thus appropriated, from whatever point the enumeration might set out, or the hebdomadal cycle begin. For if more had been intended, then it would have been necessary to establish a rule for the reckoning of days themselves, which has been different in different nations; some reckoning from evening to evening, as the Jews now do; others from midnight to midnight, &c. So that those persons in this country and in America, who hold their Sabbath on Saturday, under the notion of exactly conforming to the Old Testament, and yet calculate the days from midnight to midnight, have no assurance at all that they do not desecrate a part of the original Sabbath, which might begin, as the Jewish Sabbath now, on Friday evening; and on the contrary, hallow a portion of a common day, by extending the Sabbath beyond Saturday evening. Even if this were ascertained, the differences of latitude and longitude would throw the whole into disorder; and it is not probable that a universal law should have been fettered with that circumstantial exactness, which would have rendered difficult, and sometimes doubtful, astronomical calculations necessary in order to its being obeyed according to the intention of the Lawgiver. Accordingly we find, says Mr. Holden, that

"In the original institution it is stated in general terms, that God blessed and sanctified the seventh day, which must undoubtedly imply the sanctity of every seventh day; but not that it is to be subsequently reckoned from the first demiurgic day. Had this been included in the command of the Almighty, something, it is probable, would have been added declaratory of the intention; whereas expressions the most undefined are employed; not a syllable is uttered concerning the order and

number of the days; and it cannot reasonably be disputed that the command is truly obeyed by the separation of every seventh day, from common to sacred purposes, at whatever given time the cycle may commence. The difference in the mode of expression here from that which the sacred historian has used in the first chapter, is very remarkable. At the conclusion of each division of the work of creation, he says, 'The evening and the morning were the first day,' and so on; but at the termination of the whole, he merely calls it the seventh day; a diversity of phrase, which, as it would be inconsistent with every idea of inspiration to suppose it *undesigned*, must have been intended to denote *a day*, leaving it to each people as to what manner it is to be reckoned. The term obviously imports the period of the earth's rotation round its axis, while it is left undetermined, whether it shall be counted from evening or morning, from noon or midnight. The terms of the law are, 'Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.' With respect to time, it is here mentioned in the same indefinite manner as at its primeval institution, nothing more being expressly required than to observe a day of sacred rest after every six days of labour. The seventh day is to be kept holy; but not a word is said as to what epoch the commencement of the series is to be referred; nor could the Hebrews have determined from the decalogue what day of the week was to be kept as their Sabbath. The precept is not, Remember the seventh day of the week, to keep it holy, but 'Remember the Sabbath day, to keep *it* holy;' and in the following explication of these expressions, it is not said that the seventh day of the week is the Sabbath, but without restriction, 'The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God;' not the seventh according to any particular method of computing the septenary cycle; but, in reference to the six before mentioned, every seventh day in rotation after six of labour." (*Holden on the Sabbath.*)

Thus that part of the Jewish law, the decalogue, which, on the authority of the New Testament, we have shown to be obligatory upon Christians, leaves the computation of the hebdomadal cycle undetermined; and, after six days of labour, enjoins the seventh as the Sabbath, to which the Christian practice as exactly conforms as the Jewish. It is not, however, left to every individual to determine which day should be his Sabbath, though he should fulfil the law so far as to abstract the seventh part of his time from labour. It was ordained for worship, for *public* worship; and it is therefore necessary that the Sabbath should be uniformly observed by a whole community at the same time. The Divine Legislator of the Jews interposed for this end, by special direc-

tion, as to his people. The first Sabbath kept in the wilderness was calculated from the first day in which the manna fell; and with no apparent reference to the creation of the world. By apostolic authority, it is now fixed to be held on the first day of the week; and thus one of the great ends for which it was established, that it should be a day of "holy convocation," is secured.

The above observations proceed upon the ground, that the Sabbath, according to the fair interpretation of the words of Moses, was instituted upon the creation of the world. But we have had divines of considerable eminence in the English Church, who have attempted to disprove this. The reason of the zeal displayed by some of them on this question may be easily explained.

All the Churches of the reformation did not indeed agree in their views of the Sabbath; but the reformers of England and Scotland generally adopted the strict and Scriptural view; and after them the Puritans. The opponents of the Puritans, in their controversies with them, and especially after the restoration, associated a strict observance of the Sabbath with hypocrisy and disaffection; and no small degree of ingenuity and learning was employed to prove, that, in the intervals of public worship, pleasure or business might be lawfully pursued; and that this Christian festival stands on entirely different grounds from that of the Jewish Sabbath. The appointment of a Sabbath for man, at the close of the creation, was unfriendly to this notion; and an effort therefore was made to explain away the testimony of Moses in the book of Genesis, by alleging that the Sabbath is there mentioned by *prolepsis* or anticipation. Of the arguments of this class of divines, Paley availed himself in his "Moral Philosophy," and has become the most popular authority on this side of the question.

Paley's argument is well summed up, and satisfactorily answered, in the able work which has been above quoted.

"Among those who have held that the Pentateuchal record, above cited, is proleptical, and that the Sabbath is to be considered a part of the peculiar laws of the Jewish polity, no one has displayed more ability than Dr. Paley. Others on the same side have exhibited far more extensive learning, and have exercised much more patient research; but for acuteness of intellect, for coolness of judgment, and a habit of perspicacious reasoning, he has been rarely, if ever, excelled. The arguments which he has approved, must be allowed to be the chief strength of the cause; and, as he is at once the most judicious and most popular of its advocates, all that he has advanced demands a careful and candid examination. The doctrine which he maintains is, that the Sabbath was not instituted at the creation; that it was designed for the Jews only; that the *assembling* upon the first day of the week for the purpose of public worship, is a law of Christianity, of Divine appointment; but that

the *resting* on it longer than is necessary for attendance on these assemblies, is an ordinance of human institution; binding, nevertheless, upon the conscience of every individual of a country in which a weekly Sabbath is established, for the sake of the beneficial purposes which the public and regular observance of it promotes, and recommended perhaps, in some degree, to the Divine approbation, by the resemblance it bears to what God was pleased to make a solemn part of the law which he delivered to the people of Israel, and by its subserviency to many of the same uses. Such is the doctrine of this very able writer in his *Moral and Political Philosophy;* a doctrine which places the Sabbath on the footing of civil laws, recommended by their expediency, and which, being sanctioned by so high an authority, has probably given great encouragement to the lax notions concerning the Sabbath which unhappily prevail.

"Dr. Paley's principal argument is, that the first institution of the Sabbath took place during the sojourning of the Jews in the wilderness. Upon the complaint of the people for want of food, God was pleased to provide for their relief by a miraculous supply of manna, which was found every morning upon the ground about the camp: 'And they gathered it every morning, every man according to his eating; and when the sun waxed hot, it melted. And it came to pass, that on the sixth day they gathered twice as much bread, two omers for one man; and all the rulers of the congregation came and told Moses. And he said unto them, This is that which the Lord hath said, *To-morrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath unto the Lord:* bake that which ye will bake to-day, and seethe that ye will seethe; and that which remaineth over lay up for you, to be kept until the morning. And they laid it up till the morning, as Moses bade; and it did not stink, (as it had done before, when some of them left it till the morning,) neither was there any worm therein. And Moses said, Eat that to-day; *for to-day is a Sabbath unto the Lord;* to-day ye shall not find it in the field. Six days ye shall gather it, but on the seventh day, which is the Sabbath, in it there shall be none. And it came to pass, that there went out some of the people on the seventh day for to gather, and they found none. And the Lord said unto Moses, How long refuse ye to keep my commandments, and my laws? See, *for that the Lord hath given you the Sabbath,* therefore he giveth you on the sixth day the bread of two days; abide ye every man in his place; let no man go out of his place on the seventh day. So the people rested on the seventh day.'

"From this passage, Dr. Paley infers that the Sabbath was first instituted in the wilderness; but to preclude the possibility of misrepresenting his argument, I will quote his own words: 'Now, in my opinion, the transaction in the wilderness above recited, was the first actual institution of the Sabbath. For if the Sabbath had been instituted at the

time of the creation, as the words in Genesis may seem at first sight to import; and if it had been observed all along from that time to the departure of the Jews out of Egypt, a period of about two thousand five hundred years; it appears unaccountable that no mention of it, no occasion of even the obscurest allusion to it, should occur, either in the general history of the world before the call of Abraham, which contains, we admit, only a few memoirs of its early ages, and those extremely abridged; or, which is more to be wondered at, in that of the lives of the first three Jewish patriarchs, which, in many parts of the account, is sufficiently circumstantial and domestic. Nor is there, in the passage above quoted from the sixteenth chapter of Exodus, any intimation that the Sabbath, when appointed to be observed, was only the revival of an ancient institution, which had been neglected, forgotten, or suspended; nor is any such neglect imputed either to the inhabitants of the old world, or to any part of the family of Noah; nor, lastly, is any permission recorded to dispense with the institution during the captivity of the Jews in Egypt, or on any other public emergency.'

"As to the first part of this reasoning, if it were granted that in the history of the patriarchal ages no mention is made of the Sabbath, nor even the obscurest allusion to it, it would be unfair to conclude that it was not appointed previous to the departure of the children of Israel from Egypt. If instituted at the creation, the memory of it might have been forgotten in the lapse of time and the growing corruption of the world; or, what is more probable, it might have been observed by the patriarchs, though no mention is made of it in the narrative of their lives, which, however circumstantial in some particulars, is, upon the whole, very brief and compendious. Thre are omissions in the sacred history much more extraordinary. Excepting Jacob's supplication at Bethel, scarcely a single allusion to prayer is to be found in all the Pentateuch; yet considering the eminent piety of the worthies recorded in it, we cannot doubt the frequency of their devotional exercises. Circumcision being the sign of God's covenant with Abraham, was beyond all question punctually observed by the Israelites, yet, from their settlement in Canaan, no particular instance is recorded of it till the circumcision of Christ, comprehending a period of about one thousand five hundred years. No express mention of the Sabbath occurs in the books of Joshua, Judges, Ruth, the first and second of Samuel, or the first of Kings, though it was, doubtless, regularly observed all the time included in these histories. In the second book of Kings, and the first and second of Chronicles, it is mentioned only twelve times, and some of them are merely repetitions of the same instance. If the Sabbath is so seldom spoken of in this long historical series, it can be nothing wonderful if it should not be mentioned in the summary account of the patriarchal ages.

"But though the Sabbath is not expressly mentioned in the history of the antediluvian and patriarchal ages, the observance of it seems to be intimated by the division of time into weeks. In relating the catastrophe of the flood, the historian informs us, that Noah, at the end of forty days opened the window of the ark; 'and he stayed yet other seven days, and again he sent forth the dove out of the ark; and the dove came in to him in the evening, and, lo, in her mouth was an olive leaf, plucked off. So Noah knew that the waters were abated from off the earth. And he stayed yet other seven days, and sent forth the dove, which returned not again unto him any more.' The term 'week' is used by Laban in reference to the nuptials of Leah, when he says, 'Fulfil her week, and we will give thee this also, for the service which thou shalt serve with me yet seven other years.' A week of days is here plainly signified, the same portion of time which, in succeeding ages, was set apart for nuptial festivities, as appears from the book of Esther, where the marriage feast of Vashti lasted seven days, and more particularly from the account of Samson's marriage feast. Joseph and his brethren mourned for their father Jacob seven days.

"That the computation of time by weeks obtained from the most remote antiquity, appears from the traditionary and written records of all nations, the numerous and undeniable testimonies of which have been so often collected and displayed, that it would be worse than useless to repeat them.

"Combining all these testimonies together, they fully establish the primitive custom of measuring time by the division of weeks; and prevailing as it did among nations separated by distance, having no mutual intercourse, and wholly distinct in manners, it must have originated from one common source, which cannot reasonably be supposed any other than the memory of the creation preserved in the Noahic family, and handed down to their posterities. The computation by days, months, and years, arises from obvious causes, the revolution of the moon, and the annual and diurnal revolutions of the sun; but the division of time by periods of seven days, has no foundation in any natural or visible septenary change; it must, therefore, have originated from some positive appointment, or some tradition anterior to the dispersion of mankind, which cannot well be any other than the memory of the creation and primeval blessing of the seventh day.

"Dr. Paley's next argument is, that 'there is not in the sixteenth chapter of Exodus any intimation that the Sabbath, when appointed to be observed, was only the revival of an ancient institution which had been neglected, forgotten, or suspended.' The contrary, however, seems the more natural inference from the narrative. It is mentioned exactly in the way an historian would, who had occasion to speak of a well-known institution. For instance, when the people were astonished

at the double supply of manna on the sixth day, Moses observes, 'This is that which the Lord hath said, To-morrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath unto the Lord;' which, as far as we know, was never said previously to this transaction, but at the close of the creation. This, surely, is the language of a man referring to a matter with which the people were already acquainted, and recalling it to their remembrance. In the fifth verse, God promises on the sixth day twice as much as they gather daily. For this no reason is given, which seems to imply that it was already known to the children of Israel. Such a promise, without some cause being assigned for so extraordinary a circumstance, would have been strange indeed; and if the reason had been, that the seventh day was now for the first time to be appointed a festival, in which no work was to be done, would not the author have stated this circumstance? Again, it is said, 'Six days ye shall gather it; but on the seventh day, which is the Sabbath, in it there shall be none;' and 'for that the Lord hath given you the Sabbath, therefore he giveth you on the sixth day the bread of two days.' Here the Sabbath is spoken of as an ordinance with which the people were familiar. A double quantity of manna was given on the sixth day, *because* the following day, as they well knew, was the Sabbath in which God rested from his work, and which was to be kept as a day of rest, and holy to the Lord. It is likewise mentioned incidentally, as it were, in the recital of the miraculous supply of manna, without any notice of its being enjoined upon that occasion for the first time; which would be a very surprising circumstance, had it been the original establishment of the Sabbath. In short, the entire phraseology in the account of this remarkable transaction accords with the supposition, and with it alone, that the Sabbath had been long established, and was well known to the Israelites.

"That no neglect of the Sabbath is 'imputed either to the inhabitants of the old world, or to any of the family of Noah,' is very true; but, so far from there being any proof of such negligence, there is, on the contrary, as we have seen, much reason for believing that it was duly observed by the pious Sethites of the old world, and after the deluge, by the virtuous line of Shem. True, likewise, it is, that there is not 'any permission recorded to dispense with the institution during the captivity of the Jews in Egypt, or on any other public emergency.' But where is the evidence that such a permission would be consistent with the Divine wisdom? And if not, none such would either be given or recorded. At any rate, it is difficult to see how the silence of Scripture concerning such a circumstance, can furnish an argument in vindication of the opinion, that the Sabbath was first appointed in the wilderness.—To allege it for this purpose, is just as inconclusive as it would be to argue that the Sabbath was instituted subsequent to the return of the

Jews from Babylonia, because neither the observance of it, nor any permission to dispense with it, during the captivity, is recorded in Scripture.

"The passage in the second chapter of Genesis is next adduced by Dr. Paley, and he pronounces it not inconsistent with his opinion; 'for as the seventh day was erected into a Sabbath, on account of God's resting upon that day from the work of creation, it was natural enough in the historian, when he had related the history of the creation, and of God's ceasing from it on the seventh day, to add, 'and God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it, because that on it he had rested from all his work which God had created and made;' although the blessing and sanctification, that is, the religious distinction and appropriation of that day, were not actually made till many ages afterward. The words do not assert, that God *then* 'blessed' and 'sanctified' the seventh day, but that he blessed and sanctified it *for that reason;* and if any ask, why the Sabbath, or sanctification of the seventh day, was *then* mentioned, if it were not *then* appointed, the answer is at hand, the order of connection, and not of time, introduced the mention of the Sabbath in the history of the subject which it was ordained to commemorate.'

"That the Hebrew historian, in the passage here referred to, uses a prolepsis or anticipation, and alludes to the Mosaical institution of the Sabbath, is maintained by some of the ancient fathers, by Waehner, Heidegger, Beausobre, by Le Clerc, Rosenmuller, Geddes, Dawson, and other commentators, and by the general stream of those writers who regard the Sabbath as peculiar to the Jews. Yet this opinion is built upon the assumption, that the book of Genesis was not written till after the giving of the law, which *may* be the fact, but of which most unquestionably there is no proof. But waiving this consideration, it is scarcely possible to conceive a greater violence to the sacred text, than is offered by this interpretation. It attributes to the inspired author the absurd assertion, that God rested on the seventh day from all his works which he had made, and THEREFORE about two thousand five hundred years after, God blessed and sanctified the seventh day. It may be as well imagined that God had finished his work on the seventh day, but rested on some other seventh day, as that he rested the day following the work of creation, and afterward blessed and sanctified another. Not the slightest evidence appears for believing that Moses followed 'the order of connection, and not of time,' for no reasonable motive can be assigned for *then* introducing the mention of it, if it was not *then* appointed. The design of the sacred historian clearly is, to give a faithful account of the origin of the world; and both the *resting* on the seventh day, and the *blessing* it, have too close a connection to be separated: if the one took place immediately after the work of creation was

concluded, so did the other. To the account of the production of the universe, the whole narrative is confined; there is no intimation of subsequent events, nor the most distant allusion to Jewish ceremonies; and it would be most astonishing if the writer deserted his grand object to mention one of the Hebrew ordinances which was not appointed till ages afterward.

"But according to Dr. Geddes, the opinion of a prolepsis derives some confirmation from the original Hebrew, which he renders, 'On the sixth day God completed all the work which he had to do; and on the SEVENTH day, ceased from doing any of his works. God, therefore, blessed the seventh day, and made it holy, because on it he ceased from all his works, which he had ordained to do.' This version, he says, is 'in the supposition that the writer refers to the Jewish Sabbath:' of course it was designedly adapted to an hypothesis; but, notwithstanding this suspicious circumstance, it is not easy to determine how it differs in sense from the received translation, as it leaves the question entirely undecided *when* this blessing and sanctification took place.—The proposed version, however, is opposed by those in the Polyglott, and by the generality of translators, who render the particle *vau* at the beginning of the third verse, as a copulative, not as an illative; and it is surprising how a sound Hebrew scholar can translate it otherwise. In short, nothing can be more violent and unnatural than the proleptical interpretation; and if we add, that it rests upon the unproved assumption, that the record in question was written *after* the delivery of the law, it must appear so devoid of critical support, as not to require a moment's hesitation in rejecting it." (*Holden on the Sabbath.*)

So satisfactorily does it appear that the institution of the Sabbath is historically narrated in Genesis: and it follows from thence, that the law of the Sabbath is universal, and not peculiar to the Jews. God blessed and sanctified it, not certainly for himself, but for his creatures; that it might be a day of special *blessing* to them, and be *set apart*, not only from unholy acts, for they are forbidden on every day; but from *common* uses. It was thus stamped with a hallowed character from the commencement, and in works of a hallowed character ought it therefore to be employed.

The obligation of a Sabbatical observance upon Christians being thus established, the inquiry which naturally follows, is, In what manner is this great festival, at once so ancient and so venerable, and intended to commemorate events so illustrious and so important to mankind, to be celebrated? Many have spoken of the difficulty of settling rules of this kind; but this will ordinarily vanish, if we consent to be guided fully by the principles of Scripture.

We allow that it requires judgment, and prudence, and charity, and,

above all, a mind *well disposed* to the spiritual employment of the Sabbath, to make a right application of the law. But this is the case with other precepts also; such, for instance, as the loving our neighbour as ourselves: with respect to which we seldom hear any complaint of difficulty in the application. But, even if some want of special direction should be felt, this can only affect minor details; and probably the matter has been so left by the Lawgiver, to "try us, and prove us, and to know what is in our heart." Something may have been reserved, in this case, for the exercise of spontaneous obedience; for that generous construction of the precept which will be dictated by devotion and gratitude; and for the operation of a feeling of indignant shame, that the only day which God has reserved to himself, should be grudged to him, and trenched upon by every petty excuse of convenience, interest, or sloth, and pared down, and negociated for, in the spirit of one who seeks to overreach another. Of this we may be assured, that he who is most anxious to find exceptions to the general rule, will, in most cases, be a defaulter upon even his own estimate of the general duty.

The only real difficulties with which men have entangled themselves, have arisen from the want of clear and decided views of the law of the Sabbath as it is a matter of express revelation. There are two extremes, either of which must be fertile of perplexity. The first is, to regard the Sabbath as a prudential institution, adopted by the primitive Church, and resting upon civil and ecclesiastical authority; a notion which has been above refuted. For if this theory be adopted, it is impossible to find satisfactory rules, either in the Old or New Testament, applicable to the subject; and we may therefore cease to wonder at that variety of opinions, and those vacillations between duty and license, which have been found in different Churches, and among their theological writers. The difficulty of establishing any rule at all, to which conscience is strictly amenable, is then evident, and indeed entirely insuperable; and men in vain attempt to make a partial Sabbath by their own authority, when they reject "the day which the Lord hath made." If, on the other hand, a proper distinction is not preserved between the moral law of the Jews, which re-enacts the still more ancient institution of the Sabbath, (a law we have seen to be obligatory upon all Christians, to the end of time,) and the political and ceremonial law of that people, which contains particular rules as to the observance of the Sabbath; fixing both the day on which it was to be held, viz. the seventh of the week, and issuing certain prohibitions not applicable to all people; which branch of the Mosaic law was brought to an end by Christ,—difficulties will arise from this quarter. One difficulty will respect the day; another the hour of the diurnal circle from which the Sabbath must commence. Other difficulties will arise from the inconvenience or impossibility of accommodating the Judaical precepts to countries

and manners totally dissimilar; and others, from the degree of civil delinquency and punitiveness with which violations of the Sabbath ought to be marked in a Christian state. The kindling of fires, for instance, in their dwellings was forbidden to the Jews; but for extending this to harsher climates there is no authority. This rule would make the Sabbath a day of bodily suffering, and, in some cases, of danger to health, which is inconsistent with that merciful and festival character which the Sabbath was designed every where to bear. The same observation may apply to the cooking of victuals, which was also prohibited to the Jews by express command. To the gathering of sticks on the Sabbath the penalty of death was assigned, on one occasion, for reasons probably arising out of the theocratical government of the Jews; but surely this is no precedent for making the violation of the Sabbath a capital crime in the code of a Christian country.

Between the decalogue, and the political and ceremonial laws which followed, there is a marked distinction. They were given at two different times, and in a different manner; and, above all, the former is referred to in the New Testament, as of perpetual obligation; the other as peculiar, and as abolished by Christ. It does not follow, however, from this, that those precepts in the Levitical code, which relate to the Sabbath, are of no use to us. They show us how the general law was carried into its detail of application by the great Legislator, who condescended to be at once a civil and an ecclesiastical Governor of a chosen people; and though they are not in all respects binding upon us, in their full form, they all embody general interpretations of the fourth command of the decalogue, to which, as far as they are applicable to a people otherwise circumstanced, respect is reverently and devoutly to be had. The prohibition to buy and sell on the Sabbath is as applicable to us as to the Jews; so is that against travelling on the Sabbath, except for purposes of religion, which was allowed to them also. If we may lawfully kindle fires in our dwellings, yet we may learn from the law peculiar to the Jews, to keep domestic services under restraint; if we may cook victuals for necessity and comfort, we are to be restrained from feasting; if violations of the Sabbath are not to be made capital crimes by Christian governors, the enforcement of a decent external observance of the rest of the Sabbath is a lawful use of power, and a part of the duty of a Christian magistrate.

But the rules by which the observance of the Sabbath is clearly explained, will be found in abundant copiousness and evidence in the original command; in the decalogue; in incidental passages of Scripture, which refer not so much to the political law of the Jews, as to the universal moral code; and in the discourses and acts of Christ, and his apostles: so that, independent of the Levitical code, we have abundant guidance. It is a day of *rest* from worldly pursuits; a day *sanctified*,

that is, set apart for holy uses, which are the proper and the only lawful occupations of the day; it is a day of *public worship*, or, as it is expressed in the Mosaic law, "of holy convocation," or assembly;—a day for *the exercise of mercy* to man and beast;—a day for the *devout commemoration*, by religious acts and meditations, of the creation and redemption of the world; and, consequently, for the cultivation of that *spirit* which is suitable to such exercises, by laying aside all worldly *cares* and *pleasures;* to which holy exercises there is to be a full appropriation of the *seventh part of our time;* necessary sleep, and engagements of real necessity, as explained by our Saviour, only being excluded.

Works of charity and mercy were not excluded by the rigour of the Mosaic law, much less by the Christian dispensation. The rule of doing good on the Sabbath day has, however, sometimes been interpreted with too much laxity, without considering that such acts form no part of the *reason* for which that day was sanctified, and that they are therefore to be grounded upon the necessity of *immediate* exertion. The secularity connected with certain public charities has often been pushed beyond this rule of necessity, and as such has become unlawful.

The reason generally given for this, is, that men cannot be found to give time on the week day to the management of such charities: and they will never be found, while the rule is brought down to convenience. Men's principles are to be raised, and not the command lowered. And when ministers perseveringly do their duty, and but a few conscientious persons support them, the whole will be found practicable and easy. Charities are pressed either upon our feelings or our interests, and sometimes on both; and when they become really urgent, time will be found for their management, without "robbing God," and laying down that most debasing of all principles, that our sacrifices are to cost us nothing. The teaching of writing in Sunday schools has been pleaded for on the same assumed ground of necessity; but in all well and religiously conducted institutions of this kind it has been found quite practicable to accomplish the object in a lawful manner; and even if it had not, there was no obligation binding as to that practice, equal to that which binds us to obey the law of God. It is a work which comes not under any of our Lord's exceptions: it may be a benevolent thing; but it has in it no character of *mercy*, either to the bodies or to the souls of men.

As to amusements and recreations, which, when "*innocent*," that is, we suppose, not "immoral," are sometimes pleaded for, by persons who advocate the serious observance of the Lord's day, but a few words are necessary. If to public worship we are to add a more than ordinary attention to the duties of the family and the closet, which all such persons allow, then there is little time for recreation and amusement; and if there were, the heart which is truly impressed with duties so sacred,

and has entered into their spirit, can have no relish for them. Against every temptation of this kind, the words of the pious Archbishop Dawes may serve as a salutary admonition :—

"Dost thou require of me, O Lord, but one day in seven for thy more especial service, when as all my times, all my days, are thy due tribute; and shall I grudge thee that one day? Have I but one day in the week, a peculiar season of nurturing and training up my soul for heavenly happiness, and shall I think the whole of this too much, and judge my duties at an end, when the public offices of the Church are only ended? Ah! where, in such a case, is my zeal, my sincerity, my constancy, and perseverance of holy obedience? Where my love unto, my delight and relish in, pious performances? Would those that are thus but half Christians be content to be half saved? Would those who are thus not far from the kingdom of heaven, be willing to be utterly excluded thence for arriving no nearer to a due observance of the Lord's day! Am I so afraid of sabbatizing with the Jews, that I carelessly omit keeping the day as a good Christian? Where can be the harm of overdoing in God's worship, suppose I could overdo? But when my Saviour has told me, after I have done all, I am still an unprofitable servant, where is the hazard, where the possibility, of doing too much; whereas in doing too little, in falling short of performing a due obedience on the Sabbath, I may also fall short of eternal life?"

CHAPTER IV.

Morals—Duties to our Neighbour.

When our duty to others is summed up in the general epitome of the second table, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself;" although love must be so taken as to include many other principles and acts, yet we are thereby taught the source from which they truly spring, when performed evangelically, and also that universal charity is to be the habitual and reigning affection of the heart, in all our relations to our fellow creatures.

This affection is to be considered in its source.

That source is a regenerated state of mind. We have shown that the love of God springs from the gift of the Holy Ghost to those who are justified by faith in Christ, and that every sentiment which, in any other circumstances, assumes this designation, is imperfect or simulated. We make the same remark as to the love of our neighbour. It is an imperfect or simulated sentiment, if it flow not from the love of God, the sure mark of a regenerate nature. We here also see the superior

character of *Christian* morals, and of morals when kept in connection, as they ought always to be, with the doctrines of the Gospel, and their operation in the heart. There may, indeed, be a degree of natural benevolence; the indirect influence of a benevolent nature may counteract the selfish and the malevolent feelings; and education when well directed, will come in to the aid of nature. Yet the principle, as a religious one, and in its full operation, can only result from a supernatural change of our nature, because that only can subdue those affections which counteract benevolence and charity in their efficient and habitual manifestations.

This affection is also to be considered in respect of what it EXCLUDES. It excludes all *anger* beyond that degree of resentment which a culpable action in another may call forth, in order to mark the sense we entertain of its evil, and to impress that evil upon the offender, so that we may lead him to repent of it, and forsake it. This seems the proper rule by which to distinguish lawful anger from that which is contrary to charity, and therefore malevolent and sinful. It excludes *implacability;* for if we do not promptly and generously forgive others their trespasses, this is deemed to be so great a violation of that law of love which ought to bind men together, that our heavenly Father will not forgive us. It excludes all *revenge;* so that we are to exact no punishment of another for offences against ourselves: and though it be lawful to call in the penalties of the laws for crimes against society, yet this is never to be done on the principle of private revenge; but on the public ground, that law and government are ordained of God, which produces a case that comes under the inspired rule, "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord." It excludes all *prejudice;* by which is meant a harsh construction of men's motives and characters upon surmise, or partial knowledge of the facts, accompanied with an inclination to form an ill opinion of them in the absence of proper evidence. This appears to be what the Apostle Paul means, when he says, "Charity thinketh no evil." It excludes all *censoriousness* or *evil speaking*, when the end is not the correction of the offender, or when a declaration of the truth as to one person is not required by our love and duty to another; for whenever the end is merely to lower a person in the estimation of others, it is resolvable solely into a splenetic and immoral feeling. It excludes all those *aggressions*, whether petty or more weighty, which may be made upon the interests of another, when the law of the case, or even the abstract right, might not be against our claim. These are always complex cases, and can but occasionally occur; but the rule which binds us to do unto others as we would they should do unto us, binds us to act upon the benevolent view of the case; and to forego the rigidness of right. Finally, it excludes, as limitations to its exercise, all those *artificial distinctions* which have been created by men, or by providential

arrangements, or by accidental circumstances. Men of all nations, of all colours, of all conditions, are the objects of the unlimited precept, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." Kind feelings produced by natural instincts, by intercourse, by country, may call the love of our neighbour into warmer exercise as to individuals or classes of men, or these may be considered as distinct and special, though similar affections superadded to this universal charity; but as to all men, this charity is an efficient affection, excluding all ill will, and all injury.

But its ACTIVE EXPRESSION remains to be considered.

It is not a merely negative affection; but it brings forth rich and varied fruits. It produces a feeling of *delight* in the happiness of others, and thus destroys envy; it is the source of *sympathy* and *compassion*; it opens the hand in *liberality* for the supply of the wants of others; it gives *cheerfulness* to every service undertaken in the cause of others; it resists the wrong which may be inflicted upon them; and it will run hazards of health and life for their sakes. It has special respect to the *spiritual interests and salvation* of men; and thus it instructs, persuades, reproves the ignorant and vicious; counsels the simple; comforts the doubting and perplexed; and rejoices in those gifts and graces of others, by which society may be enlightened and purified. The zeal of apostles, the patience of martyrs, the travels and labours of evangelists in the first ages, were all animated by this affection; and the earnestness of preachers in all ages, and the more private labours of Christians for the benefit of the souls of men, with the operations of those voluntary associations which send forth missionaries to the heathen, or distribute Bibles and tracts, or conduct schools, are all its visible expressions before the world. A principle of philanthropy may be conceived to exist independent of the influence of active and efficient Christianity; but it has always expended itself either in good wishes, or, at most, in feeble efforts, chiefly directed to the mitigation of a little temporary external evil. Except in connection with religion, and that the religion of the heart, wrought and maintained there by the acknowledged influences of the Holy Spirit, the love of mankind has never exhibited itself under such views and acts as those we have just referred to. It has never been found in characters *naturally* selfish and obdurate; has never disposed men to make great and painful sacrifices for others; never sympathized with spiritual wretchedness; never been called forth into its highest exercises by considerations drawn from the immortal relations of man to eternity; never originated large plans for the illumination and moral culture of society; never fixed upon the grand object to which it is now bending the hearts, the interests, and hopes of the universal Church, the conversion of the world. Philanthropy, in systems of mere ethics, like their love of God, is a greatly *inferior* principle to that which is enjoined by Christianity, and infused by its influence;—another proof

of the folly of separating morals from revealed truth, and of the necessity of cultivating them upon evangelical principles.

The same conclusion will be established, if we consider those WORKS OF MERCY which the principle of universal philanthropy will dictate, and which form a large portion of our "duty to our neighbour." It is more the design of this part of the present work, to exhibit the peculiar nature and perfection of the morals of Christianity, than to consider moral duties in detail; and, therefore, it is only necessary to assume what is obvious to all, that the exercise of practical mercy to the needy and miserable, is a moral duty clearly revealed, including also the application of a part of our property to benefit mankind in other respects, as we have opportunity. But let us ask, under what rules can the *quantum* of our exertions in doing good to others be determined, except by the authority of revealed religion? It is clear that there is an antagonist principle of selfishness in man, which counteracts our charities; and that the demands of personal gratification, and of family interests, and of show and expense in our modes of living, are apt to take up so large a share of what remains after our necessities, and the lawful demands of station, and a prudent provision for old age and for our families after our decease, are met, that a very small portion is wont to be considered as lawfully disposable, under all these considerations, for purposes of general beneficence. If we have no rules or principles, it is clear that the most limited efforts may pass for very meritorious acts; or that they will be left to be measured only by the different degrees of natural compassion in man, or by some immoral principle, such as the love of human praise. There is nothing in any mere system of morals to direct in such cases; certainly nothing to compel either the principles or the heart. Here then we shall see also in how different a predicament this interesting branch of morality stands, when kept in close and inseparable connection with Christianity. It is true, that we have no specific rule as to the quantum of our givings in the Scriptures; and the reason of this is not inapparent. Such a rule must have been branched out into an inconvenient number of detailed directions to meet every particular case; it must have respected the different and changing states of society and civilization; it must have controlled men's savings as well as givings, because the latter are dependent upon them; it must have prescribed modes of dress, and modes of living: all which would have left cases still partially touched or wholly unprovided for, and the multiplicity of rules might have been a trap to our consciences, rather than the means of directing them. There is also a more general reason for this omission. The exercise of mercy is a work of the affections; it must have, therefore, something free and spontaneous in it; and it was designed to be voluntary, that the moral effect produced upon society might be to bind men together in a softer bond, and to call forth reciprocally good

affections. To this the stern character of particular laws would have been inimical. Christianity teaches mercy, by general principles, which at once sufficiently direct and leave to the heart the free play of its affections.

The general LAW is express and unequivocal: "As ye have opportunity do good unto all men, and especially to them that are of the household of faith." "To do good and to communicate forget not, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased." A most important and influential principle, to be found in no mere system of ethics, is also contained in the revelation of a particular relation in which we all stand to God, and on which we must be judged at the last day. We are "stewards," "servants," to whom the great Master has committed his "goods," to be used according to his directions. We have nothing, therefore, of our own, no right in property, except under the conditions on which it is committed to us; and we must give an account for our use of it, according to the rule. A rule of proportion is also in various passages of Scripture expressly laid down: "Where little is given, little is required; where much is given much is required." "For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to what a man hath, and not according to what he hath not." It is a farther rule, that our charities should be both cheerful and abundant. "See that ye *abound* in this grace also," "not grudgingly, or of necessity, for God loveth a cheerful giver." These general rules and principles being laid down, the appeal is made to the heart, and men are left to the influence of the spiritual and grateful affections excited there. All the venerable examples of Scripture are brought to bear upon the free and liberal exercises of beneficence, crowned with the example of our Saviour: "Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might become rich." An appeal is made to man's gratitude for the blessings of Providence to himself, and he is enjoined to give "as the Lord hath prospered him." Our fellow creatures are constantly presented to us under tender relations, as our "brethren;" or, more particularly, as "of the household of faith." Special promises are made of God's favour and blessing, as the reward of such acts in the present life: "And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work;" and finally, although every notion of merit is excluded, yet the rewards of eternity are represented as to be graciously dispensed, so as specially to distinguish and honour every "work of faith," and "labour of love." Under so powerful an *authority*, so explicit a general *directory*, and so effectual an *excitement*, is this branch of morality placed by the Gospel.

As our religion enjoins charity, so also it prescribes JUSTICE. As a

mutual dependence has been established among men, so also there are mutual *rights*, in the rendering of which to each other, justice, when considered as a social virtue, consists.

Various definitions and descriptions of justice are found among moralists and jurists, of different degrees of importance and utility to those who write, and to those who study, formal treatises on its collective or separate branches. The distribution of justice into *ethical*, *economical*, and *political*, is more suited to our purpose, and is sufficiently comprehensive. The first considers all mankind as on a level; the second regards them as associated into families, under the several relations of husband and wife, parents and children, masters and servants; and the third comprehends them as united into public states, and obliged to certain duties, either as magistrates or people. On all these the rules of conduct in Scripture are explicit and forcible.

Ethical justice, as it considers mankind as on a level, chiefly therefore respects what are usually called men's *natural* rights, which are briefly summed up in three,—*life*, *property*, and *liberty*.

The natural right to *life* is guarded by the precept, "Thou shalt not kill;" and it is also limited by the more ancient injunction to the sons of Noah, "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed." In a state of society, indeed, this right may be farther limited by a government, and capital punishments be extended to other crimes, (as we see in the Mosaic law,) provided the law be equally binding on all offenders, and rest upon the necessity of the case, as determined by the good of the whole community; and also that in every country professing Christianity, the merciful as well as the righteous character of that religion be suffered to impress itself upon its legislation. But against all individual authority the life of man is absolutely secured; and not only so, but anger, which is the first principle of violence, and which proceeds first to malignity and revenge, and then to personal injuries, is prohibited, under the penalty of the Divine wrath; a lofty proof of the superior character of the Christian rule of justice.

In *property*, lawfully acquired, that is, acquired without injury to others, every man has also a natural right. This right also may be restrained in society, without injustice, seeing it is but the price which every man pays for protection, and other advantages of the social state; but here also the necessity of the case, resting upon the benefit of the community, is to be the rule of this modification of the natural claim. The law too must lie equally upon all, *cæteris paribus;* and every individual whose right of property is thus interfered with must have his due share of the common advantage. Against individual aggression the right of property is secured by the Divine law, "Thou shalt not steal;" and by another law which carries the restraint up to the very principle of justice in the heart, "Thou shalt not covet;" covetousness being

that corrupt affection from which injuries done to others in their property arise. The Christian injunction, to be "*content* with such things as we have," is another important security. The rule which binds rulers and governments in their interferences with this natural right of property, comes under the head of political justice.

Liberty is another natural right, which by individual authority, at least, cannot be interfered with. Hence "man stealing," the object of which is to reduce another to slavery, by obtaining forcible possession of his person, and compelling his labour, is ranked with crimes of the greatest magnitude in the New Testament; and against it the special vengeance of God is threatened. By the Jewish law also, it was punished with death. How far the natural right which every man has to his own liberty may, like the natural right to property, be restrained by public authority, is a point on which different opinions have been held. Prisoners of war were formerly considered to be absolute *captives*, the right of which claim is involved in the question of the right of war. Where one can be justified, so may the other; since a surrender of the person in war is the commutation of liberty for life.* In the more humane practice of modern warfare, an exchange of prisoners is effected; but even this supposes an acquired right on each side in the prisoners, and a commutation by an exchange. Should the progeny of such prisoners of war, doomed, as by ancient custom, to perpetual servitude, be also kept in slavery, and the purchase of slaves also be practised, the question which then arises is one which tries the whole case of slavery, as far as public law is concerned. Among the patriarchs there was a mild species of domestic servitude, distinct from that of captives of war. Among the Jews, a Hebrew might be sold for debt, or sell himself when poor, but only till the year of release. After that, his continuation in a state of slavery was perfectly voluntary. The Jews might, however, hold foreigners as slaves for life. Michaelis has well observed, that, by the restrictions of his law, Moses remarkably mitigated the rigours of slavery. "This is, as it were, the spirit of his laws respecting it. He appears to have regarded it as a hardship, and to have disapproved of its severities. Hence we find him, in Deut. xxiii, 15, 16, ordaining, that no foreign servant, who sought for refuge among the Israelites, should be delivered up to his master." (*Commentaries on the Laws of Moses.*) This view of the case, we may

* Montesquieu says, "It is false that killing in war is lawful, unless in a case of absolute necessity: but when a man has made another his slave, he cannot be said to have been under a necessity of taking away his life, since he actually did not take it away. War gives no other right over prisoners than to disable them from doing any farther harm, by securing their persons." And "if a prisoner of war is not to be reduced to slavery, much less are his children." This reason therefore, with others, assigned by the civilians in justification of slavery, he concludes is "false." (*Spirit of Laws*, book xv, chap. ii.)—AMERICAN EDITORS.

add, will probably afford the reason why slavery was at all allowed under the Jewish dispensation. The general state of society in the surrounding nations might perhaps render it a necessary evil; but in other countries it existed in forms harsh and oppressive, while the merciful nature of the Mosaic institute impresses upon it a mild and mitigated character, in recognition of man's natural rights, and as an example to other countries. And to show how great a contrast with our modern colonial slavery, the case of slaves among the Jews presented, we may remark, that all foreign slaves were circumcised, and therefore initiated into the true religion; that they had the full and strict advantage of the Sabbath confirmed to them by express statute; that they had access to the solemn religious festivals of the Jews, and partook of the feasts made upon the offerings; that they could possess property, as appears from Lev. xxv, 49, and 2 Sam. ix, 10; and that all the fruits which grew spontaneously during the Sabbatical year were given to them, and to the indigent. Michaelis has also showed, that not only was the ox not muzzled when treading out the corn, but that the slaves and day labourers might eat without restraint of the fruits they were gathering in their master's service, and drink of the wine they pressed from the wine press. (*Commentaries on the Laws of Moses*, art. 130.) The Jewish law may therefore be considered not so much as controlling the natural right which man has to liberty, and so authorizing the infraction of that right under certain circumstances, but as coming in to regulate and to soften a state of things already existing, and grown into general practice. All, therefore, that can be fairly inferred from the existence of slavery under that law, is, that a legislature, in certain cases, may be justified in mitigating, rather than abolishing, that evil. But even here, since the Legislator was in fact God, whose right to dispose of his creatures cannot be questioned, and since also the nations neighbouring to the Jews were under a malediction because of their idolatries, the Jewish law can be no *rule* to a Christian state; and all arguments drawn from it in favour of perpetual slavery, suppose that a mere earthly legislature is invested with the powers and prerogatives of the Divine Legislator of the Jews, which of course vitiates the whole reasoning.

As to the existence of slavery in Christian states, every government, as soon as it professes to be Christian, binds itself to be regulated by the principles of the New Testament; and though a part of its subjects should at that time be in a state of servitude, and their sudden emancipation might be obviously an injury to society at large, it is bound to show that its spirit and tendency is as inimical to slavery as is the Christianity which it professes. All the injustice and oppression against which it can guard that condition, and all the mitigating regulations it can adopt, are obligatory upon it; and since also every Christian slave

is enjoined by apostolic authority to choose freedom, when it is possible to attain it, as being a better state, and more befitting a Christian man, so is every Christian master bound, by the principle of loving his neighbour, and more especially his "brother in Christ," as himself, to promote his passing into that better and more Christian state. To the instruction of the slaves in religion would every such Christian government also be bound, and still farther to adopt measures for the final extinction of slavery; the rule of its proceeding in this case being the accomplishment of this object as soon as is compatible with the real welfare of the enslaved portion of its subjects themselves, and not the consideration of the losses which might be sustained by their proprietors, which, however, ought to be compensated by other means, as far as they are just, and equitably estimated.

If this be the mode of proceeding clearly pointed out by Christianity to a state on its first becoming Christian, when previously, and for ages, the practice of slavery had grown up with it; how much more forcibly does it impose its obligation upon nations involved in the guilt of the modern African slavery! They professed Christianity when they commenced the practice. They entered upon a traffic which *ab initio* was, upon their own principles, unjust and cruel. They had no rights of war to plead against the natural rights of the first captives; who were in fact stolen, or purchased from the stealers, knowing them to be so. The governments themselves never acquired any right of property in the parents; they have none in their descendants, and can acquire none; as the thief who steals cattle cannot, should he feed and defend them, acquire any right of property, either in them or the stock they may produce, although he should be at the charge of rearing them. These governments not having a right of property in their colonial slaves, could not transfer any right of property in them to their present masters, for it could not give what it never had; nor, by its connivance at the robberies and purchases of stolen human beings alter the essential injustice of the transaction. All such governments are therefore clearly bound, as they fear God and dread his displeasure, to restore all their slaves to the condition of free men. Restoration to their friends and country is now out of the question; they are bound to protect them where they are, and have the right to exact their obedience to good laws in return; but property in them they cannot obtain;—their natural right to liberty is untouched and inviolable. The manner in which this right is to be restored, we grant, is in the power of such governments to determine, provided that proceeding be regulated by the principles above laid down,—First, that the emancipation be sincerely determined upon, at some time future: Secondly, that it be not delayed beyond the period which the *general interest of the slaves themselves* prescribes, and which is to be judged of benevolently, and without any bias of

judgment, giving the advantage of every doubt to the injured party. Thirdly, that all possible means be adopted to render freedom a good to them. It is only under such circumstances that the continuance of slavery among us can cease to be a national sin, calling down, as it has done, and must do until a process of emancipation be honestly commenced, the just displeasure of God. What compensations may be justly claimed from the governments, that is, the public of those countries who have entangled themselves in this species of unjust dealing, by those who have purchased men and women whom no one had the right to sell, and no one had the right to buy, is a perfectly distinct question, and ought not to turn repentance and justice out of their course, or delay their operations for a moment. Perhaps, such is the unfruitful nature of all wrong, that it may be found, that, as free labourers, the slaves would be of equal or more value to those who employ them, than at present. If otherwise, as in some degree "all have sinned," the real loss ought to be borne by all, when that loss is fairly and impartially ascertained; but of which loss, the slave interest, if we may so call it, ought in justice to bear more than an equal share, as having had the greatest gain.*

The rules of Christian justice thus secure the three great natural rights of man; but it may be inquired whether he has himself the power of surrendering them at his own option?

And first with respect to LIFE.

Since government is an institution of God, it seems obligatory upon all men to live in a social state; and if so, to each is conceded the right of putting his life to hazard, when called upon by his government to defend that state from domestic rebellion or foreign war. So also we have the power to *hazard* our lives to save a fellow creature from perishing. In times of persecution for religion, we are enjoined by our Lord to flee from one city to another; but when flight is cut off, we have the power to surrender life rather than betray our allegiance to Christ. According to the apostle's rule, "we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren;" that is, for the Church and the cause of religion. In this case, and in some others, accompanied with danger to life, when a plain rule of duty is seen to be binding upon us, we are not only at liberty to take the risk, but are bound to do it; since it is more our duty to obey God than to take care of our health and life. These instances of devotion have been by some writers called "suicides of duty," a phrase which may well be dispensed with, although the sentiment implied in it is correct.

* The above paragraphs, under the last head, were obviously written with a view to states in which Christianity, as a system, is formally established by law and in which the acts of the government are officially based on this principle.—AMERICAN EDITORS.

On suicide, properly so called, that is self murder, our modern moralists have added little to what is advanced by the ethical writers of Greece and Rome, to prove its unlawfulness; for, though suicide was much practised in those ancient states, and sometimes commended, especially by the Stoics, it was occasionally condemned. "We men," says Plato, "are all by the appointment of God in a certain prison or custody, which we ought not to break out of, or run away." So likewise Cicero: "God, the supreme governor of all things, forbids us to depart hence without his order. All pious men ought to have patience to continue in the body, as long as God shall please, who sent us hither; and not force themselves out of the world before he calls for them, lest they be found deserters of the station appointed them by God."

This is the reasoning which has generally satisfied our moralists on this subject, with the exception of some infidel sophists, and two or three writers of paradoxes in the Established Church, who have defended suicide, or affected to do so. Paley has added some other considerations, drawn from his doctrine of general tendency, and from the duties which are deserted, the injuries brought upon others, &c; but the whole only shows, that merely ethical reasoning furnishes but a feeble barrier against this offence against God, against society, and against ourselves, independent of the Holy Scriptures. There the prohibitions of a Divine law lie directly against this act, and also the whole spirit of that economy under which we are placed by almighty God.

It is very true, that, in the Old Testament history, we have a few instances of suicide among the Jews, which were not marked by any penal visitation, as among modern nations, upon the remains of the deceased; such as the denial of honourable sepulture, &c. But this arose from the absence of all penalty in such cases in the Mosaic law. In this there was great reason; for the subject himself is by his own direful act put beyond the reach of human visitation; and every dishonour done to the inanimate corse is only punishment inflicted upon the innocent survivors, who, in most cases, have a large measure of suffering already entailed upon them. This was probably the humane reason for the silence of the Mosaic law as to the punishment of suicide.

But as the law of the two tables is of general moral obligation, although a part also of the municipal law of the Jews; as it concerned them as creatures, as well as subjects of the theocracy; it takes cognizance of acts not merely as prejudicial to society, but as offensive to God, and in opposition to his will as the ruler of the world. The precept, therefore, "Thou shalt not kill," must be taken to forbid, not only murder properly so called, which is a crime against society, to be reached by human penalties, but also self destruction, which, though a crime also in a lower degree against society, no human penalties can visit, but is left, since the offender is out of the reach of man, wholly to the retribu-

tion of God. The absence of all *post mortem* penalties against suicide in the Mosaic law, is no proof, therefore, that it is not included in the prohibition, "Thou shalt not kill," any more than the absence of all penalties in the same law against a covetous disposition, proves any thing against the precept, "Thou shalt not covet," being interpreted to extend to the heart of man, although violences, thefts, and other instances of covetousness, in *action only*, are restrained in the Mosaic law by positive penalties. Some have urged it, however, as a great absurdity, to allege this commandment as a prohibition of suicide. "When a Christian moralist," says Dr. Whately, "is called on for a direct Scriptural precept against suicide, instead of replying that the Bible is not meant for a complete code of *laws*, but for a system of *motives* and *principles*, the answer frequently given is, 'Thou shalt do no murder.' Suicide, if any one considers the nature, and not the name of it, (self murder,) evidently wants the essential characteristic of murder, viz. the *hurt* and injury done to one's neighbour, in depriving him of life, as well as to others by the *insecurity* they are in consequence liable to feel." (*Elements of Logic.*) All this might be correct enough, but for one error into which the writer has fallen,—that of assuming that the precept is, "Thou shalt do no *murder*;" for if that were the term used in the strict sense, we need not be told that suicide is not murder, which is only saying, that the killing one's self is not the killing another. The authorized translation uses the word "*kill*," "thou shalt not *kill*," as better rendering the Hebrew word, which has a similar latitude of meaning, and is used to express fortuitous homicide, and the act of depriving of life generally, as well as murder, properly so called. That the prohibition respects the killing of others with criminal intent, all agree, and Moses describes, Numbers i, 35, the circumstances which make that killing so criminal as to be punishable with death; but that he included the different kinds of homicide within the prohibition, is equally certain, because the Mosaic law takes cognizance of homicide, and provides for the due examination of its circumstances by the judges, and recognizes the custom of the Goel, or avenging of blood, and provides cities of refuge for the homicide; a provision which, however merciful, left the incautious manslayer subject to risks and inconveniences which had the nature of penalties. So tender was this law of the life of man! Moses, however, as a legislator, applying this great moral table of laws to practical legislation, could not extend the penalties under this prohibition farther than to these two cases, because in cases of suicide the offender is out of the reach of human power; but, as we see the precept extended beyond the case of murder with criminal intention, to homicide, and that the word used in the prohibition, "Thou shalt not *kill*," is so indefinite as to comprehend every act by which man is deprived of life, when it has no authority from God; it has been very properly extended by divines and Scriptu-

ral moralists, not only to homicide, but from that to *suicide*. This, indeed, appears to be its import, that it prohibits the taking away of human life in all cases, without authority from God, which authority he has lodged with human governments, the "powers ordained by him" for the regulation of mankind, in what relates to the peace and welfare of society; and whenever the life of man is taken away, except in cases sanctioned by human governments, proceeding upon the rules and principle, of the word of God, then the precept, "Thou shalt not kill," is directly violated. Dr. Whately, in the passage above adverted to, objects to suicide being called *self murder*, because this criminal act has not the qualities of that by which the life of *another* is intentionally and maliciously taken away; but if the deliberate and intentional deprivation of another of life, without authority from the Divine law, and from human laws established upon them, be that which, in fact, constitutes "murder," then is suicide entitled to be branded with the same odious appellation. The *circumstances* must, of necessity, differ; but the act itself has essentially the same criminality, though not in the same degree,—it is the taking away of the life of a human being, without the authority of God, the maker and proprietor of all, and therefore in opposition to, and defiance of, his authority. That suicide has very deservedly received the *morally descriptive* appellation of *self murder*, will also appear from the reason given, in the first prohibition against murder, for making this species of violence a capital crime. In the precepts delivered to the sons of Noah, and, therefore, through them, to all their descendants, that is, to all mankind, that against murder is thus delivered, Gen. ix, 6, "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed, *for in the image of God made he man.*" There is in this reason a manifest reference to the dignity put upon human nature, by its being endowed with a *rational* and *immortal spirit*. The crime of murder is made to lie, therefore, not merely in the putting to death the animal part of man's nature, for this is merged in a higher consideration, which seems to be, the indignity done to the noblest of the works of God; and particularly, the value of life to an *immortal* being, accountable in another state for the actions done in this, and which ought, for this very reason, to be specially guarded, since death introduces him into changeless and eternal relations, which were not to lie at the mercy of human passions. Such moralists as the writer above quoted, would restrain the essential characteristics of an act of murder to the "hurt done to a neighbour in depriving him of life," and the "insecurity" inflicted upon society; but in this ancient and universal law, it is made eminently to consist in contempt of the *image* of God in man, and its interference with man's *immortal* interests and relations as a deathless spirit; and if so, then suicide bears upon it these deep and awful characteristics of murder. It is much more wisely said by Bishop Kidder, in his remarks upon this

passage, that the reason given,—"for in the image of God made he man,"—is a farther aggravation of the sin of murder. It is a great trespass upon God, as it destroys his likeness; and *self murder*, upon this account, is forbidden as well as the killing of others.

Whatever weight may be due to the considerations urged by the moralists above quoted against this crime,—and every motive which may deter men from listening to the first temptation to so direful an act, is important,—yet the guards of Christianity must be acknowledged to be of a more powerful kind. For the principles of our religion cannot be understood without our perceiving, that, of almost all other crimes, wilful suicide ought most to be dreaded. It is a sin against God's *authority*. He is "the God of our life;" in "his hand our breath is;" and we usurp his sovereignty when we presume to dispose of it. As resulting from the pressure of mortifications of spirit, or the troubles of life, it becomes a sin, as arraigning his providential wisdom and goodness. It implies either an Atheistic denial of God's government, or a rebellious opposition to his permissive acts or direct appointments; it cannot be committed, therefore, when the mind is sound, but in the absence of all the Christian virtues, of humility, self denial, patience, and the fear and love of God, and only under the influence of pride, worldliness, forgetfulness of God, and contempt of him. It hides from the mind the realities of a future judgment, or it defies them; and it is consummated by the character of *unpardonableness*, because it places the criminal at once beyond the reach of mercy.

If no man has the right, then, to dispose of his own life by suicide, he has no right to hazard it in duels. The silence of the pulpits in those quarters where only the warning voice of the Christian preacher can be heard by that class of persons most addicted to this crime, is exceedingly disgraceful; for there can be little doubt that the palliating views of this practice taken by some ethical writers of celebrity, together with the loose reasonings of men of the world, have, from this neglect, exercised much influence upon many minds; and the consequence has been that hundreds, in this professedly Christian country, have fallen victims to false notions of honour, and to imperfect notions of the obligations of their religion. Paley has the credit of dealing with this vice with greater decision than many of our moralists. He classes it very justly with *murder*. "Murder is forbidden; and wherever human life is deliberately taken away, otherwise than by public authority, there is murder." (*Moral and Political Philosophy.*) "If unauthorized laws of honour be allowed to create exceptions to Divine prohibitions, there is an end to all morality, as founded in the will of the Deity; and the obligation of every duty may, at one time or other, be discharged by the caprice and fluctuations of fashion." (*Moral and Political Philosophy.*) The fact is, that we must either renounce Christianity, or try all cases

by its rule. The question of the lawfulness of duelling is thus promptly disposed of. If I have received a personal injury, I am bound to forgive it, unless it be of such a nature that it becomes a duty to punish it by due course of law; but even then not in the spirit of revenge, but out of respect to the peace and welfare of society. If I have given offence, I am bound to acknowledge it, and to make reparation; and if my adversary will not be satisfied, and insists upon my staking my life against his own, no considerations of reputation or disgrace, the good or ill opinion of men, who form their judgments in utter disregard to the laws of God, can have any more weight in this, than in any other case of immorality. The sin of duelling unites, in fact, the two crimes of suicide and of murder. He who falls in a duel is guilty of suicide, by voluntarily exposing himself to be slain; he by whom he falls is guilty of murder, as having shed man's blood without authority. Nay, the guilt of the two crimes unites in the same person. He who falls is a suicide in fact, and the murderer of another in intention; he by whom he falls is a murderer in fact, and so far a suicide as to have put his own life into imminent peril, in contempt of God's authority over him. He has contemned the "image of God in man," both in himself and in his brother. And where duels are not fatal on either side, the whole guilt is chargeable upon the parties, as a sin *purposed in the heart*, although, in that case, there is space left for repentance.

Life, then, is not disposable at the option of man, nor is PROPERTY itself, without respect to the rules of the Divine law; and here, too, we shall perceive the feebleness of the considerations urged, in merely moral systems, to restrain prodigal and wasteful expenditure, hazardous speculations, and even the obvious evil of gambling. Many weighty arguments, we grant, may be drawn against all these from the claims of children, and near relations, whose interests we are bound to regard, and whom we can have no right to expose even to the chance of being involved in the same ruin with ourselves. But these reasons can have little sway with those who fancy that they can keep within the verge of extreme danger, and who will plead their "natural right" to do what they will with their own. In cases, too, where there may be no children or dependent relatives, the individual would feel less disposed to acknowledge the force of this class of reasons, or think them quite inapplicable to his case. But Christianity enjoins "moderation" of the desires, and temperance in the gratification of the appetites, and in the show and splendour of life, even where a state of opulence can command them. It has its admonitions against the "love of money;" against "*willing* to be rich," except as "*the Lord* may prosper a man" in the usual track and course of honest industry,—authoritative cautions which lie directly against hazardous speculations; and it warns such as despise them of the consequent "temptations" and spiritual "snares,"

destructive to habits of piety, and ultimately to the soul, into which they must fall,—considerations of vast moment, but peculiar to itself, and quite out of the range of those moral systems which have no respect to its authority. Against gambling, in its most innocent forms, it sets its injunction, "Redeeming the time;" and in its more aggravated cases, it opposes to it not only the above considerations, as it springs from an unhallowed "love of money;" but the whole of that spirit and temper which it makes to be obligatory upon us, and which those evil and often diabolical excitements, produced by this habit, so fearfully violate. Above all, it makes property a *trust*, to be employed under the rules prescribed by Him who, as sovereign proprietor, has deposited it with us, which rules require its *use* certainly; (for the covetous are excluded from the kingdom of God;) but its use, first, for the supply of our wants, according to our station, with moderation; then, as a provision for children, and dependent relatives; finally, for purposes of charity and religion, in which "grace," as before stated, it requires us "to abound;"—and it enforces all these by placing us under the responsibility of accounting to God himself, in person, for the abuse or neglect of this trust, at the general judgment.

With respect to the third natural right, that of LIBERTY, it is a question which can seldom or never occur in the present state of society, whether a man is free to part with it for a valuable consideration. Under the law of Moses, this was certainly allowed; but a Christian man stands on different ground. To a pagan he would not be at liberty to enslave himself, because he is not at liberty to put to hazard his soul's interests, which might be interfered with by the control given to a pagan over his time and conduct. To a Christian he could not be at liberty to alienate himself, because, the spirit of Christianity being opposed to slavery, the one is not at liberty to buy, nor the other to sell, for reasons before given. I conclude, therefore, that no man can lawfully divest himself absolutely of his personal liberty, for any consideration whatever.

To the natural rights of life, property and liberty, may be added the right of CONSCIENCE.

By this is meant the right which a man has to profess his own opinions on subjects of religion, and to worship God in the mode which he deems most acceptable to him. Whether this, however, be strictly a *natural* right, like the three above mentioned, may be a subject of dispute, for then it would be *universal*, which is, perhaps, carrying the point too far. The matter may best be determined by considering the ground of that right, which differs much from the others we have mentioned. The right to life results both from the appointment of God, and the absence of a superior or countervailing right in another to deprive us of it, until, at least, we forfeit that right to some third party, by some

voluntary act of our own. This also applies to the rights of property and liberty. The right of professing particular religious opinions, and practising a particular mode of worship, can only rest upon a conviction that these are duties enjoined upon us by God. For since religion is a matter which concerns man and God, a man must know that it is obligatory upon him as a duty, and under fear of God's displeasure, to profess his opinions openly, and to practise some particular mode of worship.

To apply this to the case of persons all sincerely receiving the Bible as a revelation from God. Unquestionably it is a part of that revelation, that those who receive its doctrines should profess and attempt to propagate them; nor can they profess them in any other way than they interpret the meaning of the book which contains them. Equally clear is it, that the worship of God is enjoined upon man, and that publicly, and in collective bodies. From these circumstances, therefore, it results, that it is a *duty* which man owes to God to profess and to endeavour to propagate his honest views of the meaning of the Scriptures, and to worship God in the mode which he sincerely conceives is made obligatory upon him, by the same sacred volume. It is from this *duty* that the *right* of conscience flows, and from this alone; and it thus becomes a right of that nature which no earthly power has any authority to obstruct, because it can have no power to alter or to destroy the obligations which almighty God, the supreme governor, has laid upon his creatures.

It does not, however, follow from this statement, that human governments, professing to be regulated themselves by the principles of Christianity, have no authority to take cognizance of the *manner* in which this right of conscience is exercised. They are "ordained of God" to uphold their subjects in the exercise of their just rights respectively, and that without partiality. If, therefore, under a plea of conscience, one sect should interfere to obstruct others in a peaceable profession of their opinions, and a peaceable exercise of their worship; or should exercise its own so as to be vexatiously intrusive upon others, and in defiance of some rival sect; as for instance, in a Protestant country, if Roman Catholics were to carry the objects of their idolatry about the streets, instead of contenting themselves with worshipping in their own way, in their own chapels. In all such cases the government might be bound, in respect of the rights of other classes of its subjects, to interfere by restraint, nor would it then trespass upon the rights of conscience, justly interpreted. Again, since "the powers that be are ordained of God," for "a terror to evil doers, and a praise to them that do well;" which evil doing and well doing are to be interpreted according to the common sense and agreement of mankind, and plainly refer to moral actions only; should any sect or individual, ignorantly, fanatically, or

corruptly, so interpret the Scriptures as to suppose themselves free from moral obligation, and then proceed to practise their tenets by any such acts as violate the laws of well-ordered society, or by admitting indecencies into their modes of worship, as some fanatics in former times who used to strip themselves naked in their assemblies; here too a government would have the right to disregard the plea of conscience if set up, and to restrain such acts, and the teachers of them, as pernicious to society. But if the opinions professed by any sect, however erroneous they may be, and however zealously a sound and faithful Christian might be called by a sense of duty to denounce them as involving a corrupt conscience, or no conscience at all, and as dangerous or fatal to the salvation of those that hold them, do not interfere with the peace, the morals, and good order of society; it is not within the province of a government to animadvert upon them by force of law; since it was not established to judge of men's sincerity in religion, nor of the tendency of opinions as they affect their salvation, but only to uphold the morals and good order of the community. So, likewise, what has been called by some worship, has been sometimes marked with great excesses of enthusiasm, and with even ridiculous follies; but if the peace of others, and the morals of society, are not thereby endangered, it is not the part of the magistracy to interfere, at least by authority.

In cases, however, where political opinions are connected with religious notions, and the plea of conscience is set up as an "unalienable right," to sanction their propagation, a government may be justified in interposing, not indeed on the ground that it judges the conscience to be erring and corrupt, but for its own just support when endangered by such opinions. Sects of religious republicans have sometimes appeared under a monarchical government,—the Fifth Monarchy Fanatics, for instance, who, according to their interpretation of the kingdom of Christ, regarded the existence of all earthly monarchies as inimical to it, and believing that the period of its establishment was come, thought it impiety to acknowledge any earthly sovereign, as being contrary to their allegiance to Christ. When such notions are confined to a few persons it is wise in a government to leave them to their own absurdities as their most potent cure; but should a fanaticism of this kind seize upon a multitude, and render them restless and seditious, the state would be justifiable in restraining them by force, although a mistaken conscience might be mixed up with the error. We may therefore conclude, that as to religious sects, the plea of conscience does not take their conduct out of the cognizance of the civil magistrate when the peace, the morality, and safety of society are infringed upon; but that otherwise, the rights of conscience are inviolable, even when it is obviously erroneous, and, religiously considered, as to the individual, dangerous. The case then is one which is to be dealt with by instruction, and moral suasion. It belongs to public

instructers, and to all well-informed persons, to correct an ignorant and perverse conscience, by friendly and compassionate admonition; and the power of the magistrate is only lawfully interposed, when the effect complained of so falls upon society as to infringe upon the rights of others, or upon the public morals and peace; but even then the facts ought to be obvious, and not constructive.

The case of those who reject the revelation of the Scriptures must be considered on its own merits.

Simple Deism, in a Christian country, may lay a foundation for such a plea of conscience as the *state* ought to admit, although it should be rejected by a sound theologian. The Deist derives his religion by inference from what he supposes discoverable of the attributes and will of God from nature, and the course of the Divine government. Should he conclude that among such indications of the will of God there are those which make it his *duty* to profess his opinions, to attack the evidences of our Divine revelation as of insufficient proof, and to worship God in a manner more agreeable to his system, it would be too delicate an interference of a government with a question of conscience, to be allowed to make itself the judge whether any such conviction could be conscientiously entertained; although by divines, in their character of public instructers, this would properly be denied. Absolutely to shut out, by penal laws, all discussion on the evidences of Divine revelation, would probably make secret infidels in such numbers as would more than counterbalance the advantage which would be gained, and that by the suspicion which it would excite. But this principle would not extend to the protection of any doctrine directly subversive of justice, chastity, or humanity; for then society would be attacked, and the natural as well as civil rights of man invaded. Nor can opprobrious and blasphemous attacks upon Christianity be covered by a plea of conscience and right, since these are not necessary to argument. It is evident that conscience, in the most liberal construction of the term, cannot be pleaded in their behalf; and they are not innocent even as to society.

To those systems which deny the immortality of the soul, and consequently, a state of future retribution, and which assume any of the forms of Atheism, no toleration can, consistently with duty, be extended by a Christian government. The reasons of this exception are, 1. That the very basis of its jurisprudence, which is founded upon a belief in God, the sanctity of oaths, and a future state, is assaulted by such doctrines, and that it cannot co-exist with them: 2. That they are subversive of the morals of the people: and, 3. That no conscience can be pleaded by their votaries for the avowal of such tenets. When the existence of a God and his moral government are denied, no conscience can exist to require the publication of such tenets; for this cannot be a duty imposed upon them by God, since they deny his existence. No right of conscience

is therefore violated when they are restrained by civil penalties. Such persons cannot have the advantages of society, without submitting to the principles on which it is founded; and as they profess to believe that they are not accountable beings, their silence cannot be a guilt to them; they give up the argument drawn from conscience, and from its rights, which have no existence at all but as founded upon REVEALED DUTY.

The second branch of justice we have denominated ECONOMICAL: it respects those relations which grow out of the existence of men in *families*.

The first is that of *husband* and *wife*, and arises out of the institution of marriage.

The foundation of the marriage union is the will of God that the human race should "increase and multiply," but only through a chaste and restricted conjunction of one man and one woman, united by their free vows in a bond made by the Divine law indissoluble, except by death or by adultery. The will of God as to marriage is, however, general, and is not so expressed as to lay an imperative obligation to marry upon every one, in all circumstances. There was no need of the law being directed to each individual as such, since the instincts of nature, and the affection of love planted in human beings, were sufficient to guarantee its general observance. The very bond of marriage too being the preference founded upon love, rendered the act one in which choice and feeling were to have great influence; nor could a prudent regard to circumstances be excluded. Cases were possible in which such a preference as is essential to the felicity and advantages of that state might not be excited, nor the due degree of affection to warrant the union called forth. There might be cases in which circumstances might be inimical to the full discharge of some of the duties of that state; as the comfortable maintenance of a wife, and a proper provision for children. Some individuals would also be called by Providence to duties in the Church and in the world, which might better be performed in a single and unfettered life; and seasons of persecution, as we are taught by St. Paul, have rendered it an act of Christian prudence to abstain even from this honourable estate. The general rule, however, is in favour of marriage; and all exceptions seem to require justification on some principle grounded upon an *equal* or a *paramount* obligation.

One intention of marriage in its original institution was the production of the greatest number of healthy children; and that it secures this object is proved from the universal fact, that population increases more, and is of better quality, where marriage is established, and its sacred laws are observed, than where the intercourse of the sexes is promiscuous. A second end was the establishment of the interesting and influential relations of acknowledged children and parents, from which the most endearing, meliorating, and pure affections result, and which could not

exist without marriage. It is indeed scarcely possible even to sketch the numerous and important effects of this sacred institution, which at once displays in the most affecting manner, the Divine benevolence and the Divine wisdom. It secures the preservation and tender nurture of children, by concentrating an affection upon them, which is dissipated and lost wherever fornication prevails. It creates conjugal tenderness, filial piety, the attachment of brothers and sisters, and of collateral relations. It softens the feelings, and increases the benevolence of society at large, by bringing all these affections to operate powerfully within each of those domestic and family circles of which society is composed. It excites industry and economy; and secures the communication of moral knowledge, and the inculcation of civility, and early habits of submission to authority, by which men are fitted to become the subjects of a public government, and without which, perhaps, no government could be sustained but by brute force, or, it may be, not sustained at all. These are some of the innumerable benefits by which marriage promotes human happiness, and the peace and strength of the community at large.

The institution of marriage not only excludes the promiscuous intercourse of the sexes, but polygamy also; a practice almost equally fatal to the kind affections, to education, to morals, and to purity. The argument of our Lord with the Pharisees, on the subject of divorce, Matt. xix, assumes it as even acknowledged by the Jews, that marriage was not only of Divine institution, but that it consisted in the union of two only,—"*they twain* shall be one flesh." This was the law of marriage given at first, not to Adam and Eve only, but prospectively to all their descendants. The first instance of polygamy was that of Lamech, and this has no *sanction* from the Scripture; which may be observed of other instances in the Old Testament. They were opposed to the original law, and in all cases appear to have been punished with many afflictive visitations. The Mosaic law, although polygamy appears to have been practised under it, gives no direct countenance to the practice; which intimates that, as in the case of divorce, the connivance was not intended to displace the original institution. Hence, in the language of the Old Testament, as well as of the New, the terms husband and wife in the singular number continually occur; and a passage in the Prophet Malachi is so remarkable as to warrant the conclusion, that among the pious Jews, the original law was never wholly out of sight. "Yet ye say, Wherefore? Because the Lord hath been witness between thee, and the wife of thy youth, against whom thou hast dealt treacherously, yet she is thy companion, and the wife of thy covenant. And did not he make one?"—(one woman)—"Yet had he the residue of the spirit?"—(and therefore could have made more than one)—"And wherefore one?" "That he might seek a godly seed," is the answer, which strongly shows how closely connected in the prophet's mind were the circumstances

of piety in the offspring and the restraint of marriage to one wife only; for he thus glances at one of the obvious evils of polygamy, its deteriorating moral influence upon children. If, however, in some instances the practice of the Jews fell short of the strictness of the original law of marriage, that law is now fully restored by Christ. In a discourse with the Pharisees, he not only re-enacts that law, but guards against its evasion by the practice of divorce; and asserts the marriage union to be indissoluble by any thing but adultery. The argument of our Lord in this discourse is, indeed, equally conclusive against polygamy and against the practice of divorce; for "if," says Dr. Paley, "whoever putteh away his wife and marrieth another committeth adultery, he who marrieth another, the first wife being living, is no less guilty of adultery; because the adultery does not consist in the repudiation of the first wife; for, however cruel and unjust that may be, it is not adultery; but in entering into a second marriage, during the legal existence and obligation of the first."

Nature itself comes in also as a confirmation of this original law.—In births, there is a small surplusage of males over females; which, being reduced by the more precarious life of males, and by the accidents to which more than females they are exposed from wars and dangerous employments, brings the number of males and females to a par, and shows that in the order of Providence a man ought to have but one wife; and that where polygamy is not allowed, every woman may have a husband. This equality, too, is found in all countries; although some licentious writers have attempted to deny it upon unsound evidence.

Another end of marriage was, the prevention of fornication; and as this is done, not only by providing for a lawful gratification of the sexual appetite; but more especially by that mutual affection upon which marriages, when contracted according to the will of God, are founded, this conjunction necessarily requires that degree of love between the contracting parties which produces a preference of each other above every man or woman in the world. Wherever this degree of affection does not exist, it may therefore be concluded that the rite of marriage is profaned, and the greatest security for the accomplishment of its moral ends weakened or destroyed. Interest, compliance with the views of family connections, caprice, or corporal attractions, it may be therefore concluded, are not in themselves lawful grounds of marriage, as tending, without affection, to frustrate the intention of God in its institution; to which end all are bound to subject themselves. On the other hand, since love is often a delusive and sickly affection, exceedingly temporary and uncertain, when it is unconnected with judgment and prudence; and also because marriages are for the most part contracted by the young and inexperienced, whose passions are then strongest when their judgments are most immature; in no step in

life is the counsel of others more necessary, and in no case ought it to be sought with greater docility than in this. A proper respect to the circumstances of age, fitness, &c, ought never to be superseded by the plea of mere affection; although no circumstances can justify marriage without that degree of affection which produces an absolute preference.

Whether marriage be a civil or a religious contract has been a subject of dispute. The truth seems to be that it is both. It has its engagements to men, and its vows to God. A Christian state recognizes marriage as a branch of public morality, and a source of civil peace and strength. It is connected with the peace of society by assigning one woman to one man, and the state protects him, therefore, in her exclusive possession. Christianity, by allowing divorce in the event of adultery, supposes, also, that the crime must be proved by proper evidence before the civil magistrate; and lest divorce should be the result of unfounded suspicion, or be made a cover for license, the decision of the case could safely be lodged nowhere else. Marriage, too, as placing one human being more completely under the power of another than any other relation, requires laws for the protection of those who are thus so exposed to injury. The distribution of society into families, also, can only be an instrument for promoting the order of the community, by the cognizance which the law takes of the head of a family and by making him responsible, to a certain extent, for the conduct of those under his influence. Questions of property are also involved in marriage and its issue. The law must, therefore, for these and many other weighty reasons, be cognizant of marriage; must prescribe various regulations respecting it; require publicity of the contract; and guard some of the great injunctions of religion in the matter by penalties. In no well ordered state can marriage, therefore, be so exclusively left to religion as to shut out the cognizance and control of the state. But then those who would have the whole matter to lie between the parties themselves, and the civil magistrate, appear wholly to forget that marriage is a solemn religious act, in which vows are made to God by both persons, who, when the rite is properly understood, engage to abide by all those laws with which he has guarded the institution; to love and cherish each other; and to remain faithful to each other until death. For if, at least, they profess belief in Christianity, whatever duties are laid upon husbands and wives in Holy Scripture, they engage to obey, by the very act of their contracting marriage. The question, then, is whether such vows to God as are necessarily involved in marriage, are to be left between the parties and God privately, or whether they ought to be publicly made before his ministers and the Church. On this the Scriptures are silent; but though Michaelis has showed, (*Commentaries on the Laws of Moses*,) that the priests under the law were not appointed to celebrate marriage; yet in the practice of the modern Jews, it is a

religious ceremony, the chief rabbi of the synagogue being present, and prayers being appointed for the occasion. (*Allen's Modern Judaism.*) This renders it probable that the character of the ceremony under the law, from the most ancient times, was a religious one. The more direct connection of marriage with religion in Christian states, by assigning its celebration to the ministers of religion, appears to be a very beneficial custom, and one which the state has a right to enjoin. For since the welfare and morals of society are so much interested in the performance of the mutual duties of the married state; and since those duties have a religious as well as civil character, it is most proper that some provision should be made for explaining those duties; and for this a standing form of marriage is best adapted. By acts of religion, also, they are more solemnly impressed upon the parties.—When this is prescribed in any state, it becomes a Christian cheerfully, and even thankfully, to comply with a custom of so important a tendency, as matter of conscientious subjection to lawful authority, although no Scriptural precept can be pleaded for it. That the ceremony should be confined to the clergy of an established Church is a different consideration. We are inclined to think that the religious effect would be greater, were the ministers of each religious body to be authorized by the state to celebrate marriages among their own people, due provision being made for the regular and secure registry of them, and to prevent the civil laws respecting marriage from being evaded.

When this important contract is once made, then certain *rights* are acquired by the parties mutually, who are also bound by reciprocal *duties*, in the fulfilment of which the practical "righteousness" of each consists. Here, also, the superior character of the morals of the New Testament, as well as their higher authority, is illustrated. It may, indeed, be within the scope of mere moralists to show that fidelity, and affection, and all the courtesies necessary to maintain affection, are rationally obligatory upon those who are connected by the nuptial bond; but in Christianity that fidelity is guarded by the express law, "Thou shalt not commit adultery;" and by our Lord's exposition of the spirit of that law, which forbids the indulgence of loose thoughts and desires, and places the purity of the heart under the guardianship of that hallowed fear which his authority tends to inspire. Affection, too, is made a matter of diligent cultivation upon considerations, and by a standard, peculiar to our religion. Husbands are placed in a relation to their wives, similar to that which Christ bears to his Church, and his example is thus made their rule: as Christ "gave himself," his life, "for the Church," Eph. v, 25, so are they to hazard life for their wives. As Christ saves his Church, so is it the bounden duty of husbands to endeavour, by every possible means, to promote the religious edification and salvation of their wives. The connection is thus exalted into a religious one; and when

love which knows no abatement, protection at the hazard of life, and a tender and constant solicitude for the salvation of a wife are thus enjoined, the greatest possible security is established for the exercise of kindness and fidelity. The *oneness* of this union is also more forcibly stated in Scripture than any where beside: "They twain shall be one flesh." "So ought men to love their wives *as their own bodies;* he that loveth his wife *loveth himself.* For no man ever yet hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the Church." Precept and illustration can go no higher than this; and nothing evidently is wanting either of direction or authority to raise the state of marriage into the highest, most endearing, and sanctified relation in which two human beings can stand to each other. The duties of wives are reciprocal to those of husbands. The outline in the note below (2) com-

(2) PARTICULAR DUTIES OF WIVES.	PARTICULAR DUTIES OF HUSBANDS.
Subjection, the generall head of all wives duties.	*Wisdom* and *love*, the generall heads of all husbands duties.
Acknowledgment of an husbands superioritie.	Acknowledgment of a wives neere conjunction and fellowship with her husband.
A due esteeme of her owne husband as the best for her, and worthy of honour on her part.	A good esteeme of his owne wife as the best for him, and worthy of love on his part.
An inward wive-like fear	An inward intire affection.
An outward reverend carriage toward her husband, which consisteth in a wive-like sobrietie, mildnesse, curtissie, and modestie in apparel.	An outward amiable carriage toward his wife, which consisteth in an husband-like gravity, mildnesse, courteous acceptance of her curtissie, and allowing her to wear fit apparel.
Reverend speech to and of her husband.	Mild and loving speech to and of his wife.
Obedience.	A wise maintaining his authority, and forbearing to exact all that is in his power.
Forbearing to do without, or against her husbands consent, such things as he hath power to order, as, to dispose and order the common goods of the familie, and the allowance for it, or children, servants, cattell, guests, journies, &c.	A ready yielding to his wives request, and giving a generall consent and libertie unto her to order the affaires of the house, children, servants, &c. And a free allowing her something to bestow as she seeth occasion.
A ready yielding to what her husband would have done. This is manifested by a willingnesse to dwell where he will, to come when he calls, and to do what he requireth.	A forbearing to exact more than his wife is willing to doe, or to force her to dwell where it is not meet, or to enjoyne her to do things that are unmeet in themselves, or against her mind.
A patient bearing of any reproofe, and a ready redressing of that for which she is justly reproved.	A wise ordering of reproofe, not using it without just and weighty cause, and then privately and meekly.

prises both: it presents a series of obligations which are obviously drawn from the New Testament; but which nothing except that could

Contentment with her husbands present estate.

Such a subjection as may stand with her subjection to Christ.

Such a subjection as the Church yieldeth to Christ, which is sincere, pure, cheerful, constant, for conscience sake.

A provident care for his wife, according to his abilities.

A forbearing to exact any thing which stands not with a good conscience.

Such a love as Christ beareth to the Church, and man to himselfe, which is first free, in deed and truth, pure, chaste, constant.

ABERRATIONS OF WIVES FROM THEIR PARTICULAR DUTIES.

Ambition, the generall ground of the aberrations of wives.

A conceit that wives are their husbands equals.

A conceit that she could better subject herselfe to any other man than to her own husband.

An inward despising of her husband.

Unreverend behaviour toward her husband, manifested by lightnesse, sullennesse, scornefulnesse, and vanity in her attire.

Unreverend speech to and of her husband.

A stout standing on her owne will.

A peremptory undertaking to do things as she list, without and against her husbands consent. This is manifested by privy purloyning his goods, taking allowance, ordering children, servants, and cattell, feasting strangers, making journies and vows, as herselfe listeth.

An obstinate standing upon her owne will, making her husband dwell where she will, and refusing to goe when he calls, or to doe any thing upon his command.

Disdaine at reproofe: giving word for word: and waxing worse for being reproved.

ABERRATIONS OF HUSBANDS FROM THEIR PARTICULAR DUTIES.

Want of wisdome and *love*, the generall grounds of the aberrations of husbands.

Too mean account of wives.

A preposterous conceit of his owne wife to be the worst of all, and that he could love any but her.

A stoicall disposition, without all heat of affection.

An unbeseeming carriage toward his wife, manifested by his baseness, tyrannicall usage of her loftinesse, rashnesse, and niggardlinesse.

Harsh, proud, and bitter speeches to and of his wife.

Losing of his authority.

Too much strictnesse over his wife.—This is manifested by restraining her from doing any thing without particular and expresse consent, taking too strict account of her, and allowing her no more than is needful for her owne private use.

Too lordly a standing upon the highest step of his authority: being too frequent insolent, and peremptory in commanding things frivolous, unmeet, and against his wifes minde and conscience.

Rashnesse and bitternesse in reproving: and that too frequently on slight occasions, and disgracefully before children, servants, and strangers.

furnish. The extract is made from an old writer, and although expressed in homely phrase will be admired for discrimination and comprehensiveness.

THE DUTIES OF CHILDREN is a branch of Christian morality which receives both illustration and authority in a very remarkable and peculiar manner from the Scriptures. "*Honour* thy father and thy mother," is a precept which occupies a place in those tables of law which were written at first by the finger of God; and is, as the Apostle Paul notes, "the first commandment with promise." The meaning of the term *honour* is comprehensive, and imports, as appears from various passages in which it occurs, reverence, affection, and grateful obedience. It expresses at once a *principle* and a *feeling*, each of which must influence the practice; one binding obedience upon the conscience, the other rendering it the free effusion of the heart; one securing the great points of duty, and the other giving rise to a thousand tender sentiments and courtesies which mutually meliorate the temper, and open one of the richest sources of domestic felicity.

The honouring of parents is likewise enforced in Scripture, by a temporal promise. This is not peculiar to the law: for when the apostle refers to this "as the first commandment with promise," and adds, "that it may be well with thee, and that thou mayest live long on the earth," Eph. vi, 3, 4, he clearly intimates that this promise is carried forward into the Christian dispensation; and though it is undoubtedly modified by the circumstances of an economy which is not so much founded upon temporal promises as the law, it retains its full force as a general declaration of special favour on the part of God. This duty also derives a most influential and affecting illustration from the conduct of our Lord, who was himself an instance of subjection to parents; of the kindest behaviour to them; and who, amidst his agonies on the cross, commended his weeping mother to the special regard of the beloved disciple, John, charging him with her care and support as a "son," in his own stead. In no system of mere ethics, certainly, is this great duty, on which so much of human interest and felicity depends, and which exerts so much influence upon society, thus illustrated, and thus enforced.

Discontent at her husbands estate.	A carelesse neglect of his wife, and niggardly dealing with her, and that in her weaknesse.
Such a pleasing of her husband as offendeth Christ.	A commanding of unlawful things.
Such a subjection as is most unlike to the Church's, viz. fained, forced, fickle, &c.	Such a disposition as is most unlike to Christ's, and to that which a man beareth to himselfe, viz. compliment, impure, for by respects, inconstant, &c.

The duties of children may be thus sketched.

LOVE, which is founded upon esteem and reverence, comprises gratitude also; no small degree of which is obligatory upon every child for the unwearied cares, labours, and kindness of parental affection. In the few unhappy instances in which esteem for a parent can have little place, gratitude, at least, ought to remain; nor can any case arise in which the obligation of *filial love* can be cancelled.

REVERENCE, which consists in that honourable esteem of parents which children ought to cherish in their hearts, and from which springs on the one hand the desire to please, and on the other the fear to offend. The fear of a child is, however, opposed to the fear of a slave; the latter has respect chiefly to the *punishment* which may be inflicted; but the other being mixed with love, and the desire to be loved, has respect to the *offence* which may be taken by a parent, his grief, and his displeasure. Hence the fear of God, as a grace of the Spirit in the regenerate, is compared to the fear of children. This reverential regard due to parents has its external expression in all honour and civility, whether in words or actions. The behaviour is to be submissive, the speech respectful, reproof is to be borne by them with meekness, and the impatience of parents sustained in silence. Children are bound to close their eyes as much as possible upon the failings and infirmities of the authors of their being, and always to speak of them honourably among themselves, and in the presence of others. "The hearts of all men go along with Noah in laying punishment upon Ham for his unnatural and profane derision, and love the memory of those sons that would not see themselves, nor suffer others to be the witnesses of the miscarriages of their father." In the duty of "honouring" parents, is also included their support when in necessity. This appears from our Lord's application of this commandment of the law in his reproof of the Pharisees, who, if they had made a vow of their property, thought it then lawful to withhold assistance from their parents, Matt. xv, 4–6.

To affection and reverence, is to be added,

OBEDIENCE, which is universal: "Children, obey your parents *in all things*;" with only one restriction, which respects the consciences of children, when at age to judge for themselves. The apostle therefore adds, "*in the Lord*." That this limits the obedience of children to the lawful commands of parents, is clear also from our Lord's words, "If any love father or mother more than me he is not worthy of me." God is to be loved and obeyed above all. In all lawful things the rule is absolute; and the obedience, like that we owe to God, ought to be cheerful and unwearied. Should it chance to cross our inclinations, this will be no excuse for hesitancy, much less for refusal.

One of the principal cases in which this principle is often most severely tried, is that of marriage. The general rule clearly is, that

neither son nor daughter ought to marry against the command of a father, with whom the prime authority of the family is lodged; nor even without the consent of the mother, should the father be willing, if she can find any weighty reason for her objection; for, although the authority of the mother is subordinate and secondary, yet is she entitled to obedience from the child. There is, however, a considerable difference between marrying at the command of a parent, and marrying against his prohibition. In the first case, children are more at liberty than in the other; yet even here, the wishes of parents in this respect are to be taken into most serious consideration, with a preponderating desire to yield to them: but if a child feels that his affections still refuse to run in the course of the parents' wishes; if he is conscious that he cannot love his intended wife "as himself," as "his own flesh;" he is prohibited by a higher rule, which presents an insuperable barrier to his compliance. In this case the child is at liberty to refuse, if it is done deliberately, and expressed with modesty and proper regret at not being able to comply, for the reasons stated; and every parent ought to dispense freely with the claim of obedience. But to marry in opposition to a parent's express prohibition, is a very grave case. The general rule lies directly against this act of disobedience, as against all others, and the violation of it is therefore *sin*. And what blessing can be expected to follow such marriages? or rather, what curse may not be feared to follow them? The law of God is transgressed, and the image of his authority in parents is despised. Those exceptions to this rule which can be justified, are very few.

In no case but where the parties have attained the full legal age of *twenty-one* years, ought an exception to be even considered; but it may perhaps be allowed, 1. When the sole objection of the parent is the marriage of his child with a person fearing God. 2. When the sole reason given is, a wish to keep a child unmarried from caprice, interest, or other motive, which no parent has a right to require, when the child is of legal age. 3. When the objections are simply those of prejudice, without reasonable ground; but in this case, the child ought not to assume to be the sole judge of the parent's reasons; and would not be at liberty to act, unless supported by the opinion of impartial and judicious friends, whose advice and mediation ought to be asked, in order that, in so delicate an affair, he or she may proceed with a clear conscience.

The persuading a daughter to elope from her parents' house, where the motive is no other than the wilful following of personal affection, which spurns at parental control and authority, must, therefore, be considered as a great crime. It induces the daughter to commit a very criminal act of disobedience; and, on the part of the man, it is a worse kind of felony than stealing the property of another. "For children are

much more properly a man's own than his goods, and the more highly to be esteemed, by how much reasonable creatures are to be preferred before senseless things." (*Gouge on Relative Duties.*)

THE DUTIES OF PARENTS are exhibited with equal clearness in the Scriptures, and contain a body of most important practical instructions.

The first duty is LOVE, which, although a natural instinct, is yet to be cultivated and nourished by Christians under a sense of duty, and by frequent meditation upon all those important and interesting relations in which religion has placed them and their offspring. The duty of sustentation and care, therefore, under the most trying circumstances, is imperative upon parents; for, though this is not directly enjoined, it is supposed necessarily to follow from that parental love which the Scriptures inculcate; and also, because the denial of either to infants would destroy them, and thus the unnatural parent would be involved in the crime of murder.

To this follows INSTRUCTION, care for the mind succeeding the nourishment and care of the body. This relates to the providing such an education for children as is suited to their condition, and by which they may be fitted to gain a reputable livelihood when they are of age to apply themselves to business. But it specially relates to their instruction in the doctrines of Holy Writ. This is clearly what the Apostle Paul means, Eph. vi, 4, by directing parents to "bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." A parent is considered in Scripture as a PRIEST in his own family, which is a view of this relation not to be found in ethical writers, or deducible from any principles from which they would *infer* parental duties, independently of revelation; and from this it derives a most exalted character. The offices of sacrifice, intercession, and religious instruction, were all performed by the patriarchs; and, as we have already seen, although, under the law, the *offering* of sacrifices was restrained to the appointed priesthood, yet was it still the duty of the head of the family to bring his sacrifices for immolation in the prescribed manner; and so far was the institution of public teachers from being designed to supersede the father's office, that the heads of the Jewish families were specially enjoined to teach the law to their children diligently, and daily, Deut. vi, 7. Under the same view does Christianity regard the heads of its families, as priests in their houses, offering spiritual gifts and sacrifices, and as the religious instructers of their children. Hence it is, in the passage above quoted, that "fathers" are commanded "to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord;" or, in other words, in the knowledge of the doctrines, duties, motives, and hopes of the Christian religion. This is a work, therefore, which belongs to the very office of a father as the priest of his household, and cannot be neglected by him, but at his own, and his children's peril. Nor is it to be occasionally and cursorily performed,

but so that the object may be attained, namely, that they may "know the Scriptures from their childhood," and have stored their minds with their laws, and doctrines, and promises, as their guide in future life; a work which will require, at least, as much attention from the Christian as from the Jewish parent, who was commanded on this wise,—"Thou shalt teach them diligently to thy children, and thou shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up." The practice of the Jews in this respect, appears to have been adopted by the Christians of the primitive Churches, which were composed of both Jewish and Gentile converts in almost every place; and from them it is probable that the early customs of teaching children to commit portions of Scripture to memory, to repeat prayers night and morning, and to approach their parents for their blessing, might be derived. The last pleasing and impressive form, which contains a recognition of the domestic priesthood, as inherent in the head of any family, has in this country grown of late into disuse, which is much to be regretted.

It is also essential to the proper discharge of the parental duty of instructing children, that every means should be used to render what is taught influential upon the heart and conduct. It is, therefore, solemnly imperative upon parents to be "holy in all manner of conversation, and godliness," and thus to enforce truth by example. It concerns them, as much as ministers, to be anxious for the success of their labours; and recognizing the same principle, that "God giveth the increase," to be abundant in prayers for the gift of the Holy Spirit to their children. Both as a means of grace, and in recognition of God's covenant of mercy with them and their seed after them, it behooves them also to bring their children to baptism in their infancy; to explain to them the baptismal covenant when they are able to understand it; and to habituate them from early years to the observance of the Sabbath, and to regular attendance on the public worship of God.

The GOVERNMENT of children is another great branch of parental duty, in which both the parents are bound cordially to unite. Like all other kinds of government appointed by God, the end is the good of those subject to it; and it therefore excludes all caprice, vexation, and tyranny. In the case of parents, it is eminently a government of LOVE, and therefore, although it includes strictness, it necessarily excludes severity. The mild and benevolent character of our Divine religion displays itself here, as in every other instance where the heat of temper, the possession of power, or the ebullitions of passion, might be turned against the weak and unprotected. The civil laws of those countries in which Christianity was first promulgated, gave great power to parents (3)

(3) By the old Roman law, the father had the power of life and death, as to his children.

over their children, which, in the unfeeling spirit of paganism, was often harshly, and even cruelly, used. On the contrary, St. Paul enjoins, "And ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath," meaning plainly, by a rigorous severity, an overbearing and tyrannical behaviour, tending to exasperate angry passions in them. So again, "Fathers, provoke not your children, lest they be discouraged," discouraged from all attempts at pleasing, as regarding it an impossible task, "and be unfitted to pass through the world with advantage, when their spirits have been unreasonably broken under an oppressive yoke, in the earliest years of their life." (*Doddridge on* Coloss. iii, 21.) But though the parental government is founded upon kindness, and can never be separated from it, when rightly understood and exercised, it is still government, and is a trust committed by God to the parent, which must be faithfully discharged. Corporal correction is not *only* allowed, but is made a duty in Scripture, where other means would be ineffectual. Yet it may be laid down as a certain principle, that, where the authority of a parent is exercised with constancy and discretion, and enforced by gravity, kindness, and character, this will seldom be found necessary; nor, when the steady resolution of the parent to inflict it when it is demanded by the case, is once known to the child, will it need often to be repeated. Parental government is also concerned in forming the manners of children; in inculcating civility, order, cleanliness, industry, and economy; in repressing extravagant desires and gratifications in dress and amusements; and in habituating the will to a ready submission to authority. It must be so supreme, whatever the age of children may be, as to control the whole order and habits of the family, and to exclude all licentiousness, riot, and unbecoming amusements from the house, lest the curse of Eli should fall upon those who imitate his example in not reproving evil with sufficient earnestness, and not restraining it by the effectual exercise of authority.

Another duty of parents is the comfortable settlement of their children in the world, as far as their ability extends. This includes the discreet choosing of a calling, by which their children may "provide things honest in the sight of all men;" taking especial care, however, that their moral safety shall be consulted in the choice,—a consideration which too many disregard, under the influence of carelessness, or a vain ambition. The "laying up for children" is also sanctioned both by nature, and by our religion; but this is not so to be understood as that the comforts of a parent, according to his rank in life, should be abridged; nor that it should interfere with those charities which Christianity has made his personal duty.

The next of these reciprocal duties, are those of SERVANT and MASTER.

This is a relation which will continue to the end of time. Equality of condition is alike contrary to the nature of things, and to the appoint-

ment of God. Some must toil, and others direct; some command, and others obey; nor is this order contrary to the real interest of the multitude, as at first sight it might appear. The acquisition of wealth by a few affords more abundant employment to the many; and in a well ordered, thriving, and industrious state, except in seasons of peculiar distress, it is evident, that the comforts of the lower classes are greater than could be attained were the land equally divided among them, and so left to their own cultivation that no one should be the servant of another. To preserve such a state of things would be impossible; and could it be done, no arts but of the rudest kind, no manufactures, and no commerce, could exist. The very first attempt to introduce these would necessarily create the two classes of workmen and employers; of the many who labour with the hands, and the few who labour with the mind, in directing the operations; and thus the equality would be destroyed.

It is not, however, to be denied, that through the bad principles and violent passions of man, the relations of servant and master have been a source of great evil and misery. The more, therefore, is that religion to be valued, which, since these relations must exist, restrains the evil that is incident to them, and shows how they may be made sources of mutual benevolence and happiness. Wherever the practical influence of religion has not been felt, servants have generally been more or less treated with contempt, contumely, harshness, and oppression. They, on the contrary, are, from their natural corruption, inclined to resent authority, to indulge selfishness, and to commit fraud, either by withholding the just quantum of labour, or by direct theft. From the conflict of these evils in servants and in masters, too often result suspicion, cunning, overreaching, malignant passions, contemptuous and irritating speeches, the loss of principle in the servant, and of kind and equitable feeling on the part of the master.

The direct manner in which the precepts of the New Testament tend to remedy these evils, cannot but be remarked. Government in masters, as well as in fathers, is an appointment of God, though differing in circumstances; and it is, therefore, to be honoured. "Let as many servants as are under the yoke, count their own masters worthy of all *honour*;" a direction which enjoins both respectful thoughts, and humility and propriety of external demeanour toward them. *Obedience* to their commands in all things lawful is next enforced; which obedience is to be grounded on principle and conscience; on "singleness of heart, as unto Christ;" thus serving a master with the same sincerity, the same desire to do the appointed work well, as is required of us by Christ. This service is also to be *cheerful*, and not wrung out merely by a sense of duty: "Not with eye service, as men pleasers;" not having respect simply to the approbation of the master, but "as the servants of Christ," making profession of his religion, "doing the will of God," in this branch

of duty, "from the *heart*," with alacrity and good feeling. The duties of servants, stated in these brief precepts, might easily be shown to comprehend every particular which can be justly required of persons in this station; and the whole is enforced by a sanction which could have no place but in a revelation from God,—"knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free," Eph. vi, 5. In other words, even the common duties of servants, when faithfully, cheerfully, and piously performed, are by Christianity made rewardable actions: "Of the Lord ye shall receive a reward."

The duties of servants and masters are, however, strictly reciprocal. Hence the apostle continues his injunctions as to the right discharge of these relations, by saying, immediately after he had prescribed the conduct of servants, "And ye, masters, do *the same things* unto them;" that is, act toward them upon the same equitable, conscientious, and benevolent principles, as you exact from them. He then grounds his rules, as to masters, upon the great and influential principle, "Knowing that your Master is in heaven;" that you are under authority, and are accountable to him for your conduct to your servants. Thus masters are put under the eye of God, who not only maintains their authority, when properly exercised, by making their servants accountable for any contempt of it, and for every other failure of duty, but also holds the master himself responsible for its just and mild exercise. A solemn and religious aspect is thus at once given to a relation, which by many is considered as one merely of interest. When the apostle enjoins it on masters to "forbear threatening," he inculcates the treatment of servants with kindness of manner, with humanity, and good nature; and, by consequence also, the cultivation of that benevolent feeling toward persons in this condition, which, in all rightly influenced minds, will flow from the consideration of their equality with themselves in the sight of God; their equal share in the benefits of redemption; their relation to us as brethren in Christ, if they are "partakers of like precious faith;" and their title to the common inheritance of heaven, where all those temporary distinctions on which human vanity is so apt to fasten, shall be done away. There will also not be wanting in such minds, a consideration of the service rendered; (for the benefit is mutual;) and a feeling of gratitude for service faithfully performed, although it is compensated by wages or hire.

To benevolent sentiment the apostle, however, adds the principles of justice and equity: "Masters, give to your servants that which is *just* and *equal*, knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven," who is the avenger of injustice. The terms *just* and *equal*, though terms of near affinity, have a somewhat different signification. To give that which is *just* to a servant, is to deal with him according to an agree-

ment made; but to give him what is *equal*, is to deal fairly and honestly with him, and to return what is his due in reason and conscience, even when there are circumstances in the case which strict law would not oblige us to take into the account. "Justice makes our *contracts* the measure of our dealings with others, and equity our *consciences*." (*Fleetwood's Relative Duties.*) Equity here may also have respect particularly to that important rule which obliges us to do to others what we would, in the same circumstances, have them to do to us. This rule of equity has a large range in the treatment of servants. It excludes all arbitrary and tyrannical government; it teaches masters to respect the strength and capacity of their servants; it represses rage and passion, contumely and insult; and it directs that their labour shall not be so extended as not to leave proper time for rest, for attendance on God's worship, and, at proper seasons, for recreation.

The *religious* duties of masters are also of great importance.

Under the Old Testament the servants of a house partook of the common benefit of the true religion, as appears from the case of the servants of Abraham, who were all brought into the covenant of circumcision; and from the early prohibition of idolatrous practices in families, and, consequently, the maintenance of the common worship of God. The same consecration of whole families to God we see in the New Testament; in the baptism of "houses," and the existence of domestic Churches. The practice of inculcating the true religion upon servants, passed from the Jews to the first Christians, and followed indeed from the conscientious employment of the master's *influence* in favour of piety; a point to which we shall again advert.

From all this arises the duty of instructing servants in the principles of religion; of teaching them to read, and furnishing them with the Scriptures; of having them present at family worship; and of conversing with them faithfully and affectionately respecting their best interests. In particular, it is to be observed, that servants have by the law of God a right to the Sabbath, of which no master can, without sin, deprive them. They are entitled under that law to rest on that day; and that not only for the recreation of their strength and spirits, but, especially, to enable them to attend public worship, and to read the Scriptures, and pray in private. Against this duty all those offend who employ servants in works of gain; and also those who do not so arrange the affairs of their households, that domestic servants may be as little occupied as possible with the affairs of the house, in order that they may be able religiously to use a day which is made as much theirs as their masters', by the express letter of the law of God; nor can the blessing of God be expected to rest upon families where this shocking indifference to the religious interests of domestics, and this open disregard of the Divine command prevail. A Jewish strictness in some

particulars is not bound upon Christians; as, for example, the prohibition against lighting fires. These were parts of the municipal, not the moral law of the Jews; and they have respect to a people living in a certain climate, and in peculiar circumstances. But even these prohibitions are of use as teaching us self denial, and that in all cases we ought to keep within the rules of necessity. Unnecessary occupations are clearly forbidden even when they do not come under the description of *work* for gain; and when they are avoided, there will be sufficient leisure for every part of a family to enjoy the Sabbath as a day of rest, and as a day of undistracted devotion. We may here also advert to that heavy national offence which still hangs upon us, the denying to the great majority of our bond slaves in the West Indies, those Sabbath rights which are secured to them by the very religion we profess. Neither as a day of *rest*, nor as a day of *worship*, is this sacred day granted to them; and for this our insolent and contemptuous defiance of God's holy law, we must be held accountable. This is a consideration which ought to induce that part of the community who retain any fear of God, to be unwearied in their applications to the legislature, until this great reproach, this weight of offence against religion and humanity, shall be taken away from us.

The employment of *influence* for the religious benefit of servants, forms another part of the duty of every Christian master. This appears to be obligatory upon the general principle, that every thing which can be used by us to promote the will of God, and to benefit others, is "a talent" committed to us, which we are required by our Lord to "occupy." It is greatly to be feared, that this duty is much neglected among professedly religious masters; that even domestic servants are suffered to live in a state of spiritual danger, without any means being regularly and affectionately used to bring them to the practical knowledge of the truth; means which, if used with judgment and perseverance, and enforced by the natural influence of a superior, might prove in many instances both corrective and saving. But if this duty be much neglected in households, it is much more disregarded as to that class of servants who are employed as day labourers by the farmer, as journeymen by the master artisan, and as workmen by the manufacturer. More or less the master comes into immediate connection with this class of servants; and although they are not so directly under his control as those of his household, nor within reach of the same instruction, yet is he bound to discountenance vice among them; to recommend their attendance on public worship; to see that their children are sent to schools; to provide religious help for them when sick; to prefer sober and religious men to others; and to pay them their wages in due time for market, and so early on the Saturday, or on the Friday, that their families may not be obstructed in their preparations for attending the

house of God on the Lord's day morning. If the religious character and bias of the master were thus *felt* by his whole establishment, and a due regard paid uniformly to justice and benevolence in the treatment of all in his employ, not only would great moral good be the result, but there would be reason to hope that the relation between employers and their workmen, which, in consequence of frequent disputes respecting wages and combinations, has been rendered suspicious and vexatious, would assume a character of mutual confidence and reciprocal good will.

Political justice respects chiefly the relation of *subject* and *sovereign*, a delicate branch of morals in a religious system introduced into the world under such circumstances as Christianity, and which in its wisdom it has resolved into general principles of easy application, in ordinary circumstances. With equal wisdom it has left extraordinary emergencies unprovided for by special directions; though even in such cases the path of duty is not without light reflected upon it from the whole genius and spirit of the institution.

On the origin of power, and other questions of government, endless controversies have been held, and very different theories adopted, which, so happily is the world exchanging government by force for government by public opinion, have now lost much of their interest, and require not, therefore, a particular examination.

On this branch of morals, as on the others we have already considered, the Scriptures throw a light peculiar to themselves; and the theory of government which they contain will be found perfectly accordant with the experience of the present and best age of the world as to practical government, and exhibits a perfect harmony with that still more improved civil condition which it must ultimately assume in consequence of the diffusion of knowledge, freedom, and virtue.

The leading doctrine of Scripture is, that government is an ordinance of God. It was manifestly his will that men should live in society; this cannot be doubted. The very laws he has given to men, prescribing their relative duties, assume the permanent existence of social relations, and therefore place them under regulation. From this fact the Divine appointment of government flows as a necessary consequence. A society cannot exist without rules or laws; and it therefore follows that such laws must be upheld by enforcement. Hence an *executive* power in some form must arise, to guard, to judge, to reward, to punish. For if there were no executors of laws, the laws would become a dead letter, which would be the same thing as having none at all; and where there are no laws, there can be no society. But we are not left to inference. In the first ages of the world government was paternal, and the power of government was vested in parents by the express appointment of God. Among the Jews, rulers, judges, kings, were also appointed by God

himself; and as for all other nations, the New Testament expressly declares, that "the powers which be are ordained of God."

The origin of power is not, therefore, from man, but from God. It is not left as a matter of choice to men, whether they will submit to be governed or not; it is God's appointment that they should be subject to those powers whom he, in his government of the world, has placed over them, in all things for which he has instituted government, that is, that it should be "a terror to evil doers, and a praise to them that do well." Nor are they at liberty "to resist the power," when employed in accomplishing such legitimate ends of government; nor to deny the right, nor to refuse the means, even when they have the power to do so, by which the supreme power may restrain evil, and enforce truth, righteousness, and peace. Every supreme power, we may therefore conclude, is invested with full and unalienable authority to govern well; and the people of every state are bound, by the institution of God, cheerfully and thankfully to submit to be so governed.

There can, therefore, be no such compact between any parties as shall originate the right of government, or the duty of being governed; nor can any compact annul, in the least, the rightful authority of the supreme power to govern efficiently for the full accomplishment of the ends for which government was divinely appointed; nor can it place any limit upon the duty of subjects to be governed accordingly.

We may conclude, therefore, with Paley and others, that what is called "the social compact," the theory of Locke and his followers on government, is a pure fiction. In point of fact, men never did originate government by mutual agreement; and men are all born under some government, and become its subjects, without having any terms of compact proposed to them, or giving any consent to understood terms, or being conscious at all that their assent is necessary to convey the right to govern them, or to impose upon themselves the obligation of subjection. The absurdities which Paley has pointed out as necessarily following from the theory of the social compact, appear to be sufficiently well founded; but the fatal objection is, that it makes government a mere creation of man, whereas Scripture makes it an ordinance of God: it supposes no obligation anterior to human consent; whereas the appointment of God constitutes the obligation, and is wholly independent of human choice and arrangement.

The matter of government, however, does not appear to be left so loose as it is represented by the author of the *Moral and Political Philosophy*.

The ground of the subject's obligation which he assigns is "the will of God as collected from expediency." We prefer to assign the will of God as announced in the public law of the Scriptures; and which manifestly establishes two points as general rules: 1. The positive obligation

of men to submit to government: 2. Their obligation to yield obedience, in all things lawful, to the governments under which they live, as appointed by God in the order of his providence,—"the powers that be," the powers which actually exist, "are ordained of God." From these two principles it will follow, that in the case of any number of men and women being thrown together in some desert part of the world, it would be their duty to marry, to institute paternal government in their families, and to submit to a common government, in obedience to the declared will of God; and in the case of persons born under any established government, that they are required to yield submission to it as an ordinance of God, "a power" already appointed, and under which they are placed in the order of Divine providence.

Evident, however, as these principles are, they can never be pleaded in favour of oppression and wrong; since it is always to be remembered that the same Scriptures which establish these principles have set a sufficient number of guards and limits about them, and that the rights and duties of sovereign and subject are reciprocal. The manner in which they are made to harmonize with public interest and liberty will appear after these reciprocal duties and rights are explained.

The duties of the sovereign power, whatever its form may be, are, the enactment of just and equal laws; the impartial execution of those laws in mercy; the encouragement of religion, morality, learning, and industry; the protection and sustenance of the poor and helpless; the maintenance of domestic peace, and, as far as the interests of the community will allow, of peace with all nations; the faithful observance of all treaties; an incessant application to the cares of government, without exacting more tribute from the people than is necessary for the real wants of the state, and the honourable maintenance of its officers; the appointment of inferior magistrates of probity and fitness, with a diligent and strict oversight of them; and finally, the making provision for the continued instruction of the people in the religion of the Scriptures which it professes to receive as a revelation from God, and that with such a respect to the rights of conscience, as shall leave all men free to discharge their duties to Him who is "higher than the highest."

All these obligations are either plainly expressed, or are to be inferred from such passages as the following: "The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me, He that ruleth over men must be *just*, ruling in the fear of God; and he shall be as the light of the morning when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds, as the tender grass springeth out of the earth by clear shining after rain;" images which join to the attribute of justice a constant and diffusive beneficence. "Mercy and truth preserve the king." "Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment; thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honour the person of the mighty; but in righteousness thou shalt judge." "He

that saith unto the wicked, Thou art righteous," that is, acquits the guilty in judgment, "him shall the people curse, nations shall abhor him." "Moreover thou shalt provide out of all the people able men; such as fear God; men of truth, hating covetousness,; and place such over them, and let them judge the people at all seasons." "Him that hath a high look and a proud heart I will not suffer. Mine eyes shall be upon the faithful in the land, that they may dwell with me; he that walketh in a perfect way, he shall serve me. He that worketh deceit shall not dwell in my house, he that telleth lies shall not tarry in my sight." To these and many similar passages in the Old Testament may be added, as so many intimations of the *Divine will* as to rulers, those patriotic and pious practices of such of the judges and kings of Israel as had the express approbation of God; for although they may not apply as particular rules in all cases, they have to all succeeding ages the force of the general principles which are implied in them. The New Testament directions, although expressed generally, are equally comprehensive; and it is worthy of remark, that while they assert the Divine ordination of "the powers that be," they explicitly mark out for what *ends* they were thus appointed, and allow, therefore, of no plea of Divine right in rulers for any thing contrary to them. "Render unto Cesar the things that are Cesar's," that is, things which are Cesar's by public law and customary impost. "For rulers are not a terror to *good works*, but to *the evil*. Wilt thou not be afraid of the power? Do that which is *good*, and thou shalt have *praise* of the same; for he is the minister of God to thee *for good*. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain; for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath *upon him that doeth evil*." "Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man, for the Lord's sake; whether it be to the king, as supreme, or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of *evil doers*, and for the praise of them that *do well*."

In these passages, which state the legitimate ends of government, and limit God's ordination of government to them, the duties of subjects are partially anticipated; but they are capable of a fuller enumeration.

Subjection and *obedience* are the first; qualified, however, as we know from the example of the apostles, with exceptions as to what is contrary to conscience and morality. In such cases they obeyed not, but suffered rather. Otherwise the rule is, "Let every soul be subject to the higher powers;" and that not merely "for wrath," fear of punishment, but "for conscience' sake," from a conviction that it is right. "For this cause pay ye *tribute* also; for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. Render, therefore, to all their dues, tribute to whom tribute is due, custom to whom custom, fear to whom fear,

honour to whom honour." Supplies for the necessities of government are therefore to be willingly and faithfully furnished. Rulers are also to be treated with *respect* and *reverence*: "Thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people." They are to be honoured both by external marks of respect, and by being maintained in dignity; their actions are to be judged of with candour and charity, and when questioned or blamed, this is to be done with moderation, and not with invective or ridicule, a mode of "speaking evil of dignities," which grossly offends against the Christian rule. This branch of our duties is greatly strengthened by the enjoined duty of praying for rulers, a circumstance which gives an efficacy to it which no uninspired system can furnish. "I exhort, therefore, that first of all supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men; for kings, and for all that are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty; for this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour." This holy and salutary practice is founded upon a recognition of the ordinance of God as to government; it recognizes, also, the existing powers in every place as God's "ministers;" it supposes that all public affairs are under Divine control; it reminds men of the arduous duties and responsibility of governors; it promotes a benevolent, grateful, and respectful feeling toward them; and it is a powerful guard against the factious and seditious spirit. These are so evidently the principles and tendencies of this sacred custom, that when prayer has been used, as it sometimes has, to convey the feelings of a malignant, factious, or light spirit, every well-disposed mind must have been shocked at so profane a mockery, and must have felt that such prayers "for all that are in authority," were any thing but "good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour."

Connected as these reciprocal rights and duties of rulers, and of their subjects, are with the peace, order, liberty, and welfare of society, so that were they universally acted upon, nothing would remain to be desired for the promotion of its peace and welfare; it is also evident that in no part of the world have they been fully observed, and, indeed, in most countries they are, to this day, grossly trampled upon. A question then arises, How far does it consist with Christian submission to endeavour to remedy the evils of a government?

On this difficult and often controverted point we must proceed with caution, and with steady respect to the principles above drawn from the word of God; and that the subject may be less entangled, it may be proper to leave out of our consideration, for the present, all questions relating to rival supreme powers, as in the case of a usurpation, and those which respect the duty of subjects, when persecuted by their government on account of their religion.

Although government is enjoined by God, it appears to be left to men

to judge in what FORM its purposes may, in certain circumstances, be most effectually accomplished. No direction is given on this subject in the Scriptures. The patriarchal or family governments of the most ancient times were founded upon nature; but when two or more families were joined under one head, either for mutual defence, or for aggression, the [government] was one of choice, or it resulted from a submission effected by conquest. Here in many cases, a *compact* might, and in some instances did, come in, though differing in principle from "the social compact" of theoretical writers; and this affords the only rational way of interpreting that real social compact which in some degree or other exists in all nations. In all cases where the patriarchal government was to be raised into a government common to many families, some considerable number of persons must have determined its form, and they would have the right to place it upon such fundamental principles as might seem best, provided that such principles did not interfere with the duties made obligatory by God upon every sovereign power, and with the obligations of the subject to be governed by justice in mercy, and to be controlled from injuring others. Equally clear would be the right of the community, either *en masse*, or by their natural heads or representatives, to agree upon a body of laws, which should be the standing and published expression of the will of the supreme power, that so the sovereign will on all main questions might not be subject to constant changes and the caprice of an individual; and to oblige the sovereign, as the condition of his office, to bind himself to observe these fundamental principles and laws of the state by solemn oath, which has been the practice among many nations, and especially those of the Gothic stock. It follows from hence, that while there is an ordination of God as to government, prior to the establishment of all governments, there is no ordination of a particular man or men to govern, nor any investment of families with hereditary right. There is no such ordination in Scripture, and we know that none takes place by particular revelation. God "setteth up one, and putteth down another," in virtue of his dominion over all things; but he does this through men themselves, as his controlled and often unconscious instruments. Hence, by St. Peter, in perfect consistency with St. Paul, the existing governments of the world are called "ordinances of men."—"Submit to every ordinance of *man*," or to every human creation or constitution, "for the Lord's sake, whether to the king as supreme," &c. Again, as the wisdom to govern with absolute truth and justice, is not to be presumed to dwell in one man, however virtuous, so, in this state of things, the better to secure a salutary administration, there would be a right to make provision for this also, by councils, senates, parliaments, cortes, or similar institutions, vested with suitable powers, to forward, but not to obstruct, the exercise of good government. And accordingly,

we can trace the rudiments of these institutions in the earliest stages of most regular governments. These and similar arrangements, are left to human care, prudence, and patriotism; and they are in perfect accordance with the principles of sovereign right as laid down in Scripture.

It is not, however, in the forming of a new state, that any great difficulty in morals arises. It comes in when either old states, originally ill constituted, become inadapted to the purposes of good government in a new and altered condition of society, and the supreme power refuses to adapt itself to this new state of affairs; or when in states originally well constituted, encroachments upon the public liberties take place, and great misrule or neglect is chargeable upon the executive. The question in such cases is, whether resistance to the will of the supreme power is consistent with the subjects' duty?

To answer this, resistance must be divided into two kinds,—*the resistance of opinion*, and *the resistance of force*.

As to the first, the lawfulness, nay, even the duty of it must often be allowed; but under certain qualifying circumstances. As, 1. That this resistance of opposing and inculpating opinion is not directed against government, as such, however strict, provided it be just and impartial. 2. That it is not personal against the supreme magistrate himself, or his delegated authorities, but relates to public acts only. 3. That it springs not from mere theoretical preference of some new form of government to that actually existing, so that it has in it nothing practical. 4. That it proceeds not from a hasty, prejudiced, or malignant interpretation of the character, designs, and acts of a government. 5. That it is not factious; that is, not the result of attachment to parties, and of zeal to effect mere party objects, instead of the general good. 6. That it does not respect the interests of a few only, or of a part of the community, or the mere local interests of some places in opposition to the just interests of other places. Under such guards as these, the respectful, but firm expression of opinion, by speech, writing, petition, or remonstrance, is not only lawful, but is often an imperative duty, a duty for which hazards even must be run by those who endeavour to lead up public opinion to place itself against real encroachments upon the fundamental laws of a state, or any serious maladministration of its affairs. The same conclusion may be maintained under similar reserves, when the object is to improve a deficient and inadequate state of the supreme government. It is indeed especially requisite here, that the case should be a clear one; that it should be felt to be so by the great mass of those who with any propriety can be called *the public;* that it should not be urged beyond the necessity of the case; that the discussion of it should be temperate; that the change should be directly connected with an obvious public good, not otherwise to be accomplished. When these

circumstances meet, there is manifestly no opposition to government as an ordinance of God; no blamable resistance "to the powers that be," since it is only proposed to place them in circumstances the more effectually to fulfil the duties of their office; nothing contrary, in fact, to the original compact, the object of which was the public benefit, by rendering its government as efficient to promote the good of the state as possible, and which therefore necessarily supposed a liability to future modifications, when the fairly collected public sentiment, through the organs by which it usually expresses itself as to the public weal, required it. The least equivocal time, however, for proposing any change in what might be regarded as fundamental or constitutional in a form of government originally ill settled, would be on the demise of the sovereign, when the new stipulations might be offered to his successor, and very lawfully be imposed upon him.

Resistance by *force* may be divided into two kinds. The first is that milder one which belongs to constitutional states, that is, to those in which the compact between the supreme power and the people has been drawn out into express articles, or is found in well understood and received principles and ancient customs, imposing checks upon the sovereign will, and surrounding with guards the public liberty. The application of this controlling power, which, in this country, is placed in a parliament, may have in it much of compulsion and force; as when parliament rejects measures proposed by the ministry, who are the organs of the will of the sovereign; or when it refuses the usual supplies for the army and navy, until grievances are redressed. The proper or improper use of this power depends on the circumstances; but when not employed factiously, nor under the influence of private feelings, nor in subservience to unjustifiable popular clamour, or to popular demagogues; but advisedly and patriotically, in order to maintain the laws and customs of the kingdom, there is in it no infringement of the laws of Scripture as to the subjects' obedience. A compact exists; these are the established means of enforcing it; and to them the sovereign has consented in his coronation oath.

The second kind is resistance *by force of arms;* and this at least must be established before its lawfulness, in any case, however extreme, can be proved, that it is so necessary to remedy some great public evil that milder means are totally inadequate,—a point which can very seldom be made out so clearly as to satisfy concientious men. One of three cases must be supposed:—either that the nation enjoys good institutions which it is enlightened enough to value:—or that public liberty and other civil blessings are in gradual progress; but that a part only of the people are interested in maintaining and advancing them, while a great body of ignorant, prejudiced, and corrupt persons are on the side of the supreme power, and ready to lend themselves as instruments of its mis-

rule and despotism :—or, thirdly, that although the majority of the public are opposed to infringements on the constitution, yet the sovereign, in attempting to change the fundamental principles of his compact, employs his mercenary troops against his subjects, or is aided and abetted by some foreign influence or power.

In the first case we have supposed, it does not seem possible for unjust aggressions to be successful. The people are enlightened, and attached to their institutions; and a prompt resistance of public opinion to the very first attempt of the supreme power must, in that case, be excited, and will be sufficient to arrest the evil. Accordingly, we find no instance of such a people being bereft of their liberty by their rulers. The danger in that state of society often lies on the other side. For as there is a natural inclination in men in power to extend their authority, so in subjects there is a strong disposition to resist or evade it; and when the strength of public opinion is known in any country, there are never wanting persons, who, from vanity, faction, or interest, are ready to excite the passions, and to corrupt the feelings of the populace, and to render them suspicious and unruly; so that the difficulty which a true patriotism will often have to contend with, is, not to repress but to support a just authority. Licentiousness in the people has often, by a re-action, destroyed liberty, overthrowing the powers by which alone it is supported.

The second case supposes just opinions and feelings on the necessity of improving the civil institutions of a country to be in some progress; that the evils of bad government are not only beginning to be felt, but to be extensively reflected upon; and that the circumstances of a country are such that these considerations must force themselves upon the public mind, and advance the influence of public opinion in favour of beneficial changes. When this is the case, the existing evils must be gradually counteracted, and ultimately subdued by the natural operation of all these circumstances. But if little impression has been made upon the public mind, resistance would be hopeless, and, even if not condemned by a higher principle, impolitic. The elements of society are not capable of being formed into a better system, or, if formed into it, cannot sustain it, since no form of government, however good in theory, is reducible to beneficial practice, without a considerable degree of public intelligence and public virtue. Even where society is partially prepared for beneficial changes, they may be hurried on too rapidly, that is, before sufficient previous impression has been made upon the public mind and character, and then nothing but mischief could result from a contest of force with a bad government. The effect would be that the leaders of each party would appeal to an ignorant and bad populace, and the issue on either side would prove injurious to the advancement of civil improvement. If the despotic party should triumph,

then, of course, all patriotism would be confounded with rebellion, and the efforts of moderate men to benefit their country be rendered for a long time hopeless. If the party seeking just reforms should triumph, they could only do so by the aid of those whose bad passions they had inflamed, as was the case in the French revolution; and then the result would be a violence which, it is true, overthrows one form of tyranny, but sets up another under which the best men perish. It cannot be doubted but that the sound public opinion in France, independent of all the theories in favour of republicanism which had been circulated among a people previously unprepared for political discussions, was sufficient to have effected, gradually, the most beneficial changes in its government; and that the violence which was excited by blind passions threw back the real liberties of that country for many years. The same effect followed the parliamentary war, excited in our own country in the reign of Charles the First. The resistance of arms was in neither case to be justified, and it led to the worst crimes. The extreme case of necessity was not made out in either instance; and the duty of subjects to their sovereigns was grossly violated.

The third case supposed appears to be the only one in which the renunciation of allegiance is clearly justifiable; because when the contract of a king with his people is not only violated obviously, repeatedly, and in opposition to petition and remonstrance, but a mercenary soldiery is employed against those whom he is bound to protect, and the fear of foreign force and compulsion is also suspended over them to compel the surrender of those rights which are accorded to them both by the laws of God, and the fundamental laws of the kingdom, the resistance of public feeling and sentiment, and that of the constitutional authorities, is no longer available; and such a sovereign does, in fact, lose his rights by a hostile denial of his duties, in opposition to his contract with his people. Such a case arose in this country at the revolution of 1688; it was one so clear and indubitable, as to carry with it the calm and deliberate sense of the vast majority of all ranks of society; and the whole was stamped with the character of a deliberate national act, not that of a faction. This resistance was doubtless justifiable. It involved no opposition to government as such, but was made for the purpose of serving the ends of good government, and the preservation of the very principles of the constitution. Nor did it imply any resistance to the existing power in any respect in which it was invested with any right, either by the laws of God, or those of the realm. It will, however, appear that here was a concurrence of circumstances which rendered the case one which can very rarely occur. It was not the act of a few individuals; nor of mere theorists in forms of government; nor was it the result of unfounded jealousy or alarm; nor was it the work of either the populace on the one hand,

or of an aristocratic faction on the other; but of the people under their natural guides and leaders,—the nobility and gentry of the land: nor were any private interests involved, the sole object being the public weal, and the maintenance of the laws. When such circumstances and principles meet, similar acts may be justified; but in no instance of an equivocal character.

The question of a subject's duty in case of the existence of rival supreme powers, is generally a very difficult one, at least for some time. When the question of *right* which lies between them divides a nation, he who follows his conscientious opinion as to this point is doubtless morally safe, and he ought to follow it at the expense of any inconvenience. But when a power is settled *de facto* in the possession of the government, although the right of its claim should remain questionable in the minds of any, there appears a limit beyond which no man can be fairly required to withhold his full allegiance. Where that limit lies it is difficult to say, and individual conscience must have considerable latitude; but perhaps the general rule may be, that when continued resistance would be manifestly contrary to the general welfare of the whole, it is safe to conclude that He who changes the "powers that be" at his sovereign pleasure, has in his providence permitted or established a new order of things to which men are bound to conform.

Whether men are at liberty to resist their lawful princes when persecuted by them for conscience' sake, is a question which brings in additional considerations; because of that patience and meekness which Christ has enjoined upon his followers when they suffer for his religion. When persecution falls upon a portion only of the subjects of a country, it appears their clear duty to submit, rather than to engage in plots and conspiracies against the persecuting power; practices which never can consist with Christian moderation and truth. But when it should fall upon a people constituting a distinct state, though united politically with some other, as in the case of the Waldenses, then the persecution, if carried to the violation of liberty, life, and property, would involve the violation of political rights also, and so nullify the compact which has guaranteed protection to all innocent subjects. A *national* resistance on these grounds would, for the foregoing reasons, stand on a very different basis.

No questions of this kind can come before a Christian man, however, without placing him under the necessity of considering the obligation of many duties of a much clearer character than, in almost any case, the duty of resistance to the government under which he lives, can be. He is bound to avoid all intemperance and uncharitableness, and he is not, therefore, at liberty to become a factious man; he is forbidden to indulge malignity, and is restrained therefore from revenge; he is taught to be distrustful of his own judgment, and must only admit that

of the wise and good to be influential with him; he must therefore avoid all association with low and violent men, the rabble of a state, and their designing leaders; he is bound to submission to rulers in all cases where a *superior duty* cannot be fairly established; and he is warned of the danger of resistance "to the power," as bringing after it Divine "condemnation," wherever the case is not clear, and not fully within the principles of the word of God. So circumstanced, the allegiance of a Christian people is secured to all governors, and to all governments, except in very extreme cases which can very seldom arise in the judgment of any who respect the authority of the word of God; and thus this branch of Christian morality is established upon principles which at once uphold the majesty of [government,] and throw their shield over the liberties of the people; principles which in the wisdom of God beautifully entwine [*fidelity*,] *freedom*, and *peace*.

PART FOURTH.

THE INSTITUTIONS OF CHRISTIANITY.

CHAPTER I.

The Christian Church.

The Church of Christ, in its largest sense, consists of all who have been baptized in the name of Christ, and who thereby make a visible profession of faith in his Divine mission, and in all the doctrines taught by him and his inspired apostles. In a stricter sense, it consists of those who are vitally united to Christ, as the members of the body to the head, and who, being thus imbued with spiritual life, walk no longer "after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Taken in either view, it is a visible society, bound to observe the laws of Christ, its sole Head and Lord. Visible fellowship with this Church is the duty of all who profess faith in Christ; for in this, in part, consists that "confession of Christ before men," on which so much stress is laid in the discourses of our Lord. It is obligatory on all who are convinced of the truth of Christianity to be baptized; and upon all thus baptized frequently to partake of the Lord's Supper, in order to testify their continued faith in that great and distinguishing doctrine of the religion of Christ, the redemption of the world by the sacrificial effusion of his blood, both of which suppose union with his Church. The ends of this fellowship or association are, to proclaim our faith in the doctrine of Christ as Divine in its origin, and necessary to salvation; to offer public prayers and thanksgivings to God through Christ, as the sole Mediator; to hear God's word explained and enforced; and to place ourselves under that discipline which consists in the enforcement of the laws of Christ, (which are the rules of the society called the Church,) upon the members, not merely by general exhortation, but by kind oversight, and personal injunction and admonition of its ministers. All these flow from the original obligation to avow our faith in Christ, and our love to him.

The Church of Christ being then a visible and permanent society, bound to observe certain rites, and to obey certain rules, the existence of government in it is necessarily supposed. All religious rites suppose ORDER, all order DIRECTION AND CONTROL, and these a DIRECTIVE AND CONTROLLING POWER. Again, all laws are nugatory without enforcement, in the present mixed and imperfect state of society; and all enforcement supposes an EXECUTIVE. If baptism be the door of admission into the Church, some must judge of the fitness of candidates, and

administrators of the rite must be appointed; if the Lord's Supper must be partaken of, the times and the mode are to be determined, the qualifications of communicants judged of, and the administration placed in suitable hands; if worship must be social and public, here again there must be an appointment of times, an order, and an administration; if the word of God is to be read and preached, then readers and preachers are necessary; if the continuance of any one in the fellowship of Christians be conditional upon good conduct, so that the purity and credit of the Church may be guarded, then the power of enforcing discipline must be lodged somewhere. Thus government flows necessarily from the very nature of the institution of the Christian Church; and since this institution has the authority of Christ and his apostles, it is not to be supposed that its government was left unprovided for; and if they have in fact made such a provision, it is no more a matter of mere option with Christians whether they will be subject to government in the Church, than it is optional with them to confess Christ by becoming its members.

The *nature* of this government, and the *persons* to whom it is committed, are both points which we must briefly examine by the light of the Holy Scriptures.

As to the first, it is wholly *spiritual*:—"My kingdom," says our Lord, "is not of this world." The Church is a society founded upon faith, and united by mutual love, for the personal edification of its members in holiness, and for the religious benefit of the world. The nature of its government is thus determined;—it is concerned only with spiritual objects. It cannot employ force to compel men into its pale; for the only door of the Church is faith, to which there can be no compulsion,—"he that *believeth* and is baptized" becomes a member. It cannot inflict pains and penalties upon the disobedient and refractory, like civil governments; for the only punitive discipline authorized in the New Testament, is comprised in "admonition," "reproof," "sharp rebukes," and, finally, "excision from the society." The last will be better understood if we consider the special relations in which true Christians stand to each other, and the duties resulting from them. They are members of one body, and are therefore bound to tenderness and sympathy; they are the conjoint instructers of others, and are therefore to strive to be of "one judgment;" they are brethren, and they are to love one another *as such*, that is, with an affection more special than that general good will which they are commanded to bear to all mankind; they are therefore to seek the intimacy of friendly society among themselves, and, except in the ordinary and courteous intercourse of life, they are bound to keep themselves separate from the world; they are enjoined to do good unto all men, but "specially to them that are of the household of faith;" and they are forbidden "to

eat" at the Lord's table with immoral persons, that is, with those who, although they continue their Christian profession, dishonour it by their practice. With these relations of Christians to each other and to the world, and their correspondent duties before our minds, we may easily interpret the nature of that extreme discipline which is vested in the Church. "Persons who will not hear the Church" are to be held "as heathen men and publicans," as those who are not members of it; that is, they are to be separated from it, and regarded as of "the world," quite out of the range of the above-mentioned relations of Christians to each other, and their correspondent duties; but still, like "heathen men and publicans," they are to be the objects of pity, and general benevolence. Nor is this extreme discipline to be hastily inflicted before "a first and second admonition," nor before those who are "spiritual" have attempted "to restore a brother overtaken by a fault;" and when the "wicked person" is "put away," still the door is to be kept open for his reception again upon repentance. The true excommunication of the Christian Church is therefore a merciful and considerate separation of an incorrigible offender from the body of Christians, without any infliction of civil pains or penalties. "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which ye have received from us," 2 Thess. iii, 6. "Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump," 1 Cor. v, 5. "But now I have written to you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner, with such a one, no not to eat," 1 Cor. v, 11. This then is the moral discipline which is imperative upon the Church of Christ, and its government is criminally defective whenever it is not enforced. On the other hand, the disabilities and penalties which established Churches in different places have connected with these sentences of excommunication, have no countenance at all in Scripture, and are wholly inconsistent with the spiritual character and ends of the Christian association.

As to the second point,—the *persons* to whom the government of the Church is committed, it is necessary to consider the composition, so to speak, of the primitive Church, as stated in the New Testament.

A full enunciation of these offices we find in Ephesians iv, 11: "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." Of these, the office of apostle is allowed by all to have been confined to those immediately commissioned by Christ to witness the fact of his miracles and of his resurrection from the dead, and to reveal the complete system of Christian doctrine and duty; confirming their extraordinary mission

by miracles wrought by themselves. If by "prophets" we are to understand persons who foretold future events, then the office was, from its very nature, extraordinary, and the gift of prophecy has passed away with the other miraculous endowments of the first age of Christianity. If, with others, we understand that these prophets were extraordinary teachers raised up until the Churches were settled under permanent qualified instructers; still the office was temporary. The "evangelists" are generally understood to be assistants of the apostles, who acted under their especial authority and direction. Of this number were Timothy and Titus; and as the Apostle Paul directed them to ordain bishops or presbyters in the several Churches, but gave them no authority to ordain successors to themselves in their particular office as evangelists, it is clear that the evangelists must also be reckoned among the number of extraordinary and temporary ministers suited to the first age of Christianity. Whether by "pastors and teachers" two offices be meant, or one, has been disputed. The change in the mode of expression seems to favour the latter view, and so the text is interpreted by St. Jerome, and St. Augustine; but the point is of little consequence. A pastor was a teacher; although every teacher might not be a pastor; but in many cases be confined to the office of subordinate instruction, whether as an expounder of doctrine, a catechist, or even a more private instructer of those who as yet were unacquainted with the first principles of the Gospel of Christ. The term pastor implies the duties both of instruction and of government, of feeding and of ruling the flock of Christ; and, as the presbyters or bishops were ordained in the several Churches, both by the apostles and evangelists, and rules are left by St. Paul as to their appointment, there can be no doubt but that these are the "pastors" spoken of in the Epistle to the Ephesians, and that they were designed to be the permanent ministers of the Church; and that with them both the government of the Church and the performance of its leading religious services were deposited. Deacons had the charge of the gifts and offerings for charitable purposes, although, as appears from Justin Martyr, not in every instance; for he speaks of the weekly oblations as being deposited with the chief minister, and distributed by him.

Whether bishops and presbyters be designations of the same office, or these appellatives express two distinct sacred orders, is a subject which has been controverted by Episcopalians and Presbyterians with much warmth; and whoever would fully enter into their arguments from Scripture and antiquity, must be referred to this controversy, which is too large to be here more than glanced at. The argument drawn by the Presbyterians from the promiscuous use of these terms in the New Testament, to prove that the same *order* of ministers is expressed by them, appears incontrovertible. When St. Paul, for instance,

sends for the "elders," or presbyters, of the Church of Ephesus to meet him at Miletus, he thus charges them, "Take heed to yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers," or bishops. That here the elders or presbyters are called "bishops," cannot be denied, and the very office assigned to them, to "*feed* the Church of God," and the injunction, to "take heed to the *flock*," show that the office of elder or presbyter is the same as that of "*pastor*" in the passage just quoted from the Epistle to the Ephesians. St. Paul directs Titus to "ordain elders (presbyters) in every city," and then adds, as a directory of ordination, "a *bishop* must be blameless, &c," plainly marking the same office by these two convertible appellations. "Bishops and deacons" are the only classes of ministers addressed in the Epistle to the Philippians; and if the presbyters were not understood to be included under the term "bishops," the omission of any notice of this order of ministers is not to be accounted for. As the apostles, when not engaged in their own extraordinary vocation, appear to have filled the office of stated ministers in those Churches in which they occasionally resided for considerable periods of time, they sometimes called themselves presbyters. "The elder," presbyter, "unto the elect lady," 2 John i, 1. "The elders (presbyters) which are among you, I exhort, who am also an elder," (presbyter,) and from what follows, the highest offices of teaching and government in the Church are represented as vested in the presbyters. "*Feed* the flock of God, which is among you, taking the *oversight* thereof." There seems, therefore, to be the most conclusive evidence, from the New Testament, that, after the extraordinary ministry vested in apostles, prophets, and evangelists, as mentioned by St. Paul, had ceased, the feeding and oversight, that is, the teaching and government of the Churches, devolved upon an order of men indiscriminately called "pastors," "presbyters," and "bishops," the two latter names growing into most frequent use; and with this the testimony of the apostolical fathers, so far as their writings are acknowledged to be free from later interpolations, agrees.

It is not indeed to be doubted, that, at a very early period, in some instances probably from the time of the apostles themselves, a distinction arose between bishops and presbyters; and the whole strength of the cause of the Episcopalians lies in this fact. Still this gives not the least sanction to the notion of bishops being a superior *order* of ministers to presbyters, invested, in virtue of that order, and by Divine right, with powers of government both over presbyters and people, and possessing exclusively the authority of ordaining to the sacred offices of the Church. As little too will that ancient distinction be found to prove any thing in favour of diocesan episcopacy, which is of still later introduction.

Could it be made clear that the power of ordaining to the ministry was given to bishops to the exclusion of presbyters, that would

indeed go far to prove the former a distinct and superior order of ministers in their original appointment. But there is no passage in the New Testament which gives this power at all to bishops, as thus distinguished from presbyters; while all the examples of ordination which it exhibits are confined to apostles, to evangelists, or to presbyters, in conjunction with them. St. Paul, in 2 Tim. i, 6, says, "Wherefore I put thee in remembrance, that thou stir up the gift of God which is in thee, by the putting on of my hands;" but in 1 Tim. iv, 14, he says, "Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the *presbytery*;" which two passages, referring, as they plainly do, to the same event, the setting apart of Timothy for the ministry, show that the presbytery were associated with St. Paul in the office of ordination, and farther prove that the exclusive assumption of this power, as by Divine right, by bishops, is an aggression upon the rights of presbyters, for which not only can no Scriptural authority be pleaded, but which is in direct opposition to it.

The early distinction made between bishops and presbyters may be easily accounted for, without allowing this assumed distinction of ORDER. In some of the Churches mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles, the apostles ordained several elders or presbyters, partly to supply the present need, and to provide for the future increase of believers, as it is observed by Clemens in his epistle. Another reason would also urge this:—Before the building of spacious edifices for the assemblies of the Christians living in one city, and in its neighbourhood, in common, their meetings for public worship must necessarily have been held in different houses or rooms obtained for the purpose; and to each assembly an elder would be requisite for the performance of worship. That these elders or presbyters had the power of government in the Churches cannot be denied, because it is expressly assigned *to them* in Scripture. It was inherent in their pastoral office; and "the elders that *rule* well," were to be "counted worthy of double honour." A number of elders, therefore, being ordained by the apostles to one Church, gave rise to the *cœtus presbyterorum*, in which assembly the affairs of the Church were attended to, and measures taken for the spread of the Gospel, by the aid of the common counsel and efforts of the whole. This meeting of presbyters would naturally lead to the appointment, whether by seniority or by election, of one to preside over the proceedings of this assembly for the sake of order; and to him was given the title of *angel* of the Church, and *bishop* by way of eminence. The latter title came in time to be exclusively used of the presiding elder, because of that special *oversight* imposed upon him by his office, and which, as Churches were raised up in the neighbourhood of the larger cities, would also naturally be extended over them. Independently of his fellow presbyters, however, he did nothing.

The whole of this arrangement shows, that in those particulars in which they were left free by the Scriptures, the primitive Christians adopted that arrangement for the government of the Church which promised to render it most efficient for the maintenance of truth and piety; but they did not at this early period set up that unscriptural distinction of order between bishops and presbyters, which obtained afterward. Hence Jerome, even in the fourth century, contends against this doctrine, and says, that before there were parties in religion, Churches were governed *communi consilio presbyterorum;* but that afterward it became a universal practice, founded upon experience of its *expediency*, that one of the presbyters should be *chosen by the rest* to be the head, and that the care of the Church should be committed to him. He therefore exhorts presbyters to remember that they are subject by *the custom* of the Church to him that presides over them; and reminds bishops that they are greater than presbyters, rather by *custom* than by the *appointment of the Lord;* and that the Church ought still to be governed in common. The testimony of antiquity also shows, that, after episcopacy had very greatly advanced its claims, the presbyters continued to be associated with the bishop in the management of the affairs of the Church.

Much light is thrown upon the constitution of the primitive Churches, by recollecting that they were formed very much upon the model of the Jewish synagogues. We have already seen that the mode of public worship in the primitive Church was taken from the synagogue service, and so also was its arrangement of offices. Each synagogue had its rulers, elders, or presbyters, of whom one was the angel of the Church, or minister of the synagogue, who superintended the public service; directed those that read the Scriptures, and offered up the prayers, and blessed the people. The president of the council of elders or rulers was called, by way of eminence, the "ruler of the synagogue;" and in some places, as Acts xiii, 15, we read of these "rulers" in the plural number; a sufficient proof that one was not elevated *in order* above the rest. The angel of the Church, and the minister of the synagogue, might be the same as he who was invested with the office of president; or these offices might be held by others of the elders. Lightfoot, indeed, states that the rulers in each synagogue were three, while the presbyters or elders were ten. To this council of grave and wise men, the affairs of the synagogue, both as to worship and discipline, were committed. In the synagogue they sat by themselves in a semicircle, and the people before them, face to face. This was the precise form in which the bishop and presbyters used to sit in the primitive Churches. The description of the worship of the synagogue by a Jewish rabbi, and that of the primitive Church by early Christian writers, presents an obvious correspondence. "The elders," says Maimonides, "sit with their faces toward the peo-

ple, and their backs to the place where the law is deposited; and all the people sit rank before rank; so the faces of all the people are toward the sanctuary, and toward the elders; and when the minister of the sanctuary standeth up to prayer, he standeth with his face toward the sanctuary, as do the rest of the people." In the same order the first Christians sat with their faces toward the bishops and presbyters, first to hear the Scriptures read by the proper reader; "then," says Justin Martyr, "the reader sitting down, the president of the assembly stands up and makes a sermon of instruction and exhortation; after this is ended, we all stand up to prayers; prayers being ended, the bread, wine, and water are all brought forth; then the president again praying and praising to his utmost ability, the people testify their consent by saying, Amen." (*Apol.* 2.) "Here we have the Scriptures read by one appointed for that purpose, as in the synagogue; after which follows the word of exhortation by the president of the assembly, who answers to the minister of the synagogue; after this, public prayers are performed by the same person; then the solemn acclamation of amen by the people, which was the undoubted practice of the synagogue." (*Stillingfleet's Irenicum.*) Ordination of presbyters or elders is also from the Jews. Their priests were not ordained, but succeeded to their office by birth; but the rulers and elders of the synagogue received ordination by imposition of hands and prayer.

Such was the model which the apostles followed in providing for the future regulation of the Churches they had raised up. They took it, not from the temple and its priesthood; for that was typical, and was then passing away. But they found in the institution of synagogues a plan admirably adapted to the simplicity and purity of Christianity, one to which some of the first converts in most places were accustomed, and which was capable of being applied to the new dispensation without danger of Judaizing. It secured the assembling of the people on the Sabbath, the reading of the Scriptures, the preaching of sermons, and the offering of public prayer and thanksgiving. It provided too for the government of the Church by a council of presbyters, ordained solemnly to their office by imposition of hands and prayer; and it allowed of that presidency of one presbyter chosen by the others, which was useful for order and for unity, and by which age, piety, and gifts might preserve their proper influence in the Church. The advance from this state of Scriptural episcopacy to episcopacy under another form was the work of a later age.

When the Gospel made its way into towns and villages, the concerns of the Christians in these places naturally fell under the cognizance and direction of the bishops of the neighbouring cities. Thus *dioceses* were gradually formed, comprehending districts of country, of different extent These dioceses were originally called παροικιαι,

parishes, and the word διοικησις, *diocess*, was not used in its modern sense till at least the fourth century; and when we find Ignatius describing it as the duty of a bishop, "to speak to each member of the Church separately, to seek out all by name, even the slaves of both sexes, and to advise every one of the flock in the affair of marriage," diocesses, as one observes, must have been very limited, or the labour inconceivably great.

"As Christianity increased and overspread all parts, and especially the cities of the empire, it was found necessary yet farther to enlarge the episcopal office; and as there was commonly a bishop in every *great city*, so in the *metropolis*, (as the *Romans* called it,) the mother city of every *province*, (wherein they had courts of civil judicature,) there was an ARCHBISHOP or a METROPOLITAN, who had ecclesiastical jurisdiction over all the Churches within that province. He was superior to all the bishops within those limits; to him it belonged to *ordain* or to *ratify* the elections and ordinations of all the bishops within his province, insomuch that without his confirmation they were looked upon as null and void. Once at least every year he was to summon the bishops under him to a *synod*, to inquire into and direct the ecclesiastical affairs within that province; to inspect the lives and manners, the opinions and principles of his bishops; to admonish, reprove, and suspend them that were disorderly and irregular; if any controversies or contentions happened between any of them, he was to have the *hearing* and *determination* of them; and indeed no matter of *moment* was done within the whole province, without first consulting him in the case. When this office of *metropolitan* first began, I find not; only this we are sure of, that the council of *Nice*, settling the just rights and privileges of *metropolitan bishops*, speaks of them as a thing of *ancient date*, ushering in the *canon* with an αρχαια εθη κρατειτω, *Let ancient customs still take place.* The original of the *institution* seems to have been partly to comply with the people's occasions, who oft resorted to the *metropolis* for despatch of their affairs, and so might fitly discharge their *civil* and *ecclesiastical* both at once; and partly because of the great confluence of people to that city: that the bishop of it might have pre-eminence above the rest, and the honour of the *Church* bear some proportion to that of the *state*.

"After this sprung up another *branch* of the episcopal office, as much superior to that of *metropolitans*, as theirs was to ordinary bishops; these were called PRIMATES and PATRIARCHS, and had jurisdiction over many provinces. For the understanding of this, it is necessary to know, that when Christianity came to be fully settled in the world, they contrived to model the external government of the Church, as near as might be, to the civil government of the *Roman* empire; the parallel is most exactly drawn by an *ingenious* person of our own nation; the sum

of it is this:—The whole empire of *Rome* was divided into thirteen *diocesses*, (so they called those divisions,) these contained about *one hundred and twenty provinces*, and every province several *cities*. Now, as in every city there was a *temporal* magistrate for the executing of justice, and keeping the peace, both for that city and the towns round about it; so was there also a *bishop* for spiritual order and government, whose jurisdiction was of like extent and latitude. In every province there was a proconsul or president, whose seat was usually at the *metropolis*, or chief city of the province; and hither all inferior cities came for judgment in matters of importance. And in proportion to this there was in the same city an *archbishop* or *metropolitan*, for matters of ecclesiastical concernment. Lastly, in every *diocess* the emperors had their *vicarii* or *lieutenants*, who dwelt in the principal city of the *diocess*, where all imperial *edicts* were published, and from whence they were sent abroad into the several provinces, and where was the chief *tribunal* where all causes not determinable elsewhere, were decided. And, to answer this, there was in the same city a *primate*, to whom the last determination of all appeals from all the provinces in differences of the *clergy*, and the sovereign care of all the diocess for sundry points of spiritual government, did belong. This, in short, is the sum of the account which that *learned* man gives of this matter. So that the *patriarch*, as superior to the *metropolitans*, was to have under his jurisdiction not any one single province, but a whole *diocess*, (in the old *Roman* notion of that word,) consisting of many *provinces*. To him belonged the ordination of all the *metropolitans* that were under him, as also the summoning them to councils, the *correcting* and reforming the misdemeanors they were guilty of; and from his judgment and sentence, in things properly within his cognizance, there lay no appeal. To this I shall only add what *Salmasius* has noted, that as the *diocess* that was governed by the *vicarius* had many *provinces* under it, so the *præfectus prætorio* had several *diocesses* under him: and in proportion to this, probable it was, that *patriarchs* were first brought in, who, if not superior to *primates* in jurisdiction and power, were yet in *honour*, by reason of the dignity of those cities where their sees were fixed, as at *Rome*, *Constantinople*, *Alexandria*, *Antioch*, and *Jerusalem*." (*Cave's Primitive Christianity*.)

Thus diocesan bishops, metropolitans, primates, patriarchs, and finally the pope, came in, which offices are considered as corruptions or improvements; as dictated by the necessities of the Church, or as instances of worldly ambition; as of Divine right, or from Satan; according to the different views of those who have written on such subjects. As to them all it may, however, be said, that, so far as they are pleaded for as of Divine right, they have no support from the New Testament; and if they are placed upon the only ground on which they can be reason-

ably discussed, that of necessity and good polity, they must be tried by circumstances, and their claims of authority be so defined that it may be known how far they are compatible with those principles with which the New Testament abounds, although it contains no formal plan of Church government. The only Scriptural objection to episcopacy, as it is understood in modern times, is its assumption of superiority of *order*, of an exclusive right to govern the pastors as well as the flock, and to ordain to the Christian ministry. These exclusive powers are by the New Testament no where granted to bishops in distinction from presbyters. The government of pastors as well as people, was at first in the assembly of presbyters, who were individually accountable to that ruling body, and that whether they had a president or not. So also as to ordination; it was a right in each, although used by several together, for better security; and even when the presence of a bishop came to be thought necessary to the validity of ordination, the presbyters were not excluded.

As for the argument from the succession of bishops from the times of the apostles, could the fact be made out, it would only trace diocesan bishops to the bishops of parishes; those, to the bishops of single Churches; and bishops of a supposed superior order, to bishops who never thought themselves more than presiding presbyters, *primi inter pares*. This therefore would only show that an unscriptural assumption of distinct orders has been made, which that succession, if established, would refute. But the succession itself is imaginary. Even Epiphanius, a bishop of the fourth century, gives this account of things, "that the apostles were not able to settle all things at once. But according to the number of believers, and the qualifications for the different offices which those whom they found appeared to possess, they appointed in some places only a bishop and deacons; in others presbyters and deacons; in others a bishop, presbyters, and deacons:"—a statement fatal to the argument from succession. As for the pretended catalogues of bishops of the different Churches from the days of the apostles, exhibited by some ecclesiastical writers, they are filled up by forgeries and inventions of later times. Eusebius, more honest, begins his catalogue with declaring, that it is not easy to say who were the disciples of the apostles that were appointed to feed the Churches which they planted, excepting only those whom we read of in the writings of St. Paul.

Whether episcopacy may not be a matter of prudential regulation, is another question. We think it often may; and that Churches are quite at liberty to adopt this mode, provided they maintain St. Jerome's distinction, that "bishops are greater than presbyters rather by custom than by appointment of the Lord, and that still the Church ought to be governed in common," that is, by bishops and presbyters united. It was on this ground that Luther placed episcopacy,—as useful, though not of Divine right; it was by admitting this liberty in Churches, that Cal-

vin and other divines of the Reformed Churches allowed episcopacy and diocesan Churches to be lawful, there being nothing to forbid such an arrangement in Scripture, when placed on the principle of expediency. Some divines of the English Church have chosen to defend its episcopacy wholly upon this ground, as alone tenable; and, admitting that it is safest to approach as near as possible to primitive practice, have proposed the restoration of presbyters as a senate to the bishop, the contraction of diocesses, the placing of bishops in all great towns, and the holding of provincial synods;—thus raising the presbyters to their original rank, as the bishop's "*compresbyters*," as Cyprian himself calls them, both in government and in ordinations.

As to that kind of episcopacy which trenches upon no Scriptural principle, much depends upon circumstances, and the forms in which Christian Churches exist. When a Church composes but one congregation, the minister is unquestionably a Scriptural bishop; but he is, and can be, only bishop of the flock, *episcopus gregis*. Of this kind, it appears from the extract given above from Epiphanius, were some of the primitive Churches, existing, probably, in the smaller and more remote places. Where a number of presbyters were ordained to one Church, these would, in their common assembly, have the oversight and government of each other as well as of the people; and, in this their collective capacity, they would be *episcopi gregis et pastorum*. In this manner, episcopacy, as implying the oversight and government both of ministers and their flocks, exists in Presbyterian Churches, and in all others, by whatever name they are called, where ministers are subject to the discipline of assemblies of ministers who admit to the ministry by joint consent, and censure or remove those who are so appointed. When the ancient presbyteries elected a bishop, he might remain, as he appears to have done for some time, the mere president of the assembly of presbyters, and their organ of administration; or be constituted, as afterward, a distinct governing power, although assisted by the advice of his presbyters. He was then in person an *episcopus gregis et pastorum*, and his official powers gave rise at length to the unfounded distinction of superior *order*. But abating this false principle, even diocesan episcopacy may be considered as in many possible associations of Churches throughout a province, or a whole country, as an arrangement in some circumstances of a wise and salutary nature. Nor do the evils which arose in the Church of Christ appear so attributable to this form of government as to that too intimate connection of the Church with the state, which gave to the former a political character, and took it from under the salutary control of public opinion,—an evil greatly increased by the subsequent destruction of religious liberty, and the coercive interferences of the civil magistrate.

At the same time, it may be very well questioned, whether any pres-

byters could lawfully surrender into the hands of a bishop their own rights of government and ordination without that security for their due administration which arises from the accountability of the administrator. That these are rights which it is not imperative upon the individual possessing them to exercise individually, appears to have the judgment of the earliest antiquity, because the assembly of presbyters, which was probably co-existent with the ordination of several presbyters to one Church by the apostles, necessarily placed the exercise of the office of each under the direction and control of all. When therefore a bishop was chosen by the presbyters, and invested with the government, and the power of granting orders, so long as the presbyters remained his counsel, and nothing was done but by their concurrence, they were still parties to the mode in which their own powers were exercised, and were justifiable in placing the administration in the hands of one, who was still dependent upon themselves. In this way they probably thought that their own powers might be most efficiently and usefully exercised. Provincial and national synods or councils, exercising a proper superintendence over bishops when made even more independent of their presbyters than was the case in the best periods of the primitive Church, might also, if meeting frequently and regularly, and as a part of an ecclesiastical system, afford the same security for good administration, and might justify the surrender of the exercise of their powers by the presbyters. But when that surrender was formerly made, or is at any time made now in the constitution of Churches, to bishops, or to those bearing a similar office however designated, without security and control, either by making that office temporary and elective, or by the constitution of synods or assemblies of the ministers of a large and united body of Christians for the purpose of supreme government, an office is created which has not only no countenance in Scripture, that of a bishop independent of presbyters, but one which implies an unlawful surrender of those powers, on the part of the latter, with which they were invested, not for their own sakes, but for the benefit of the Church; and which they could have no authority to divest themselves of and to transfer, without retaining the power of counselling and controlling the party charged with the administration of them. In other words, presbyters have a right, under proper regulations, to appoint another to administer for them, or to consent to such an arrangement when they find it already existing; but they have no power to divest themselves of these rights and duties absolutely. If these principles be sound, modern episcopacy, in many Churches, is objectionable in other respects than as it assumes an unscriptural distinction of order.

The following is a liberal concession on the subject of episcopacy, from a strenuous defender of that form of government as it exists in the Church of England:—

"It is not contended that the bishops, priests, and deacons, of England, are at present precisely the same that bishops, presbyters, and deacons, were in Asia Minor seventeen hundred years ago. We only maintain that there have always been bishops, priests, and deacons, in the Christian Church, since the days of the apostles, with different powers and functions, it is allowed, in different countries and at different periods; but the general principles and duties which have respectively characterized these clerical orders, have been essentially the same at all times, and in all places; and the variations which they have undergone, have only been such as have ever belonged to all persons in public situations, whether civil or ecclesiastical, and which are indeed inseparable from every thing in which mankind are concerned in this transitory and fluctuating world.

"I have thought it right to take this general view of the ministerial office, and to make these observations upon the clerical orders subsisting in this kingdom, for the purpose of pointing out the foundation and principles of Church authority, and of showing that our ecclesiastical establishment is as nearly conformable, as change of circumstances will permit, to the practice of the primitive Church. But, though I flatter myself that I have proved episcopacy to be an apostolical institution, yet I readily acknowledge that there is no precept in the New Testament which commands that every Church should be governed by bishops. No Church can exist without some government; but though there must be rules and orders for the proper discharge of the offices of public worship, though there must be fixed regulations concerning the appointment of ministers, and though a subordination among them is expedient in the highest degree, yet it does not follow that all these things must be precisely the same in every Christian country; they may vary with the other varying circumstances of human society, with the extent of a country, the manners of its inhabitants, the nature of its civil government, and many other peculiarities which might be specified. As it has not pleased our almighty Father to prescribe any particular form of civil government for the security of temporal comforts to his rational creatures, so neither has he prescribed any particular form of ecclesiastical polity as absolutely necessary to the attainment of eternal happiness. But he has, in the most explicit terms, enjoined obedience to all governors, whether civil or ecclesiastical, and whatever may be their denomination, as essential to the character of a true Christian. Thus the Gospel only lays down general principles, and leaves the application of them to men as free agents." (*Bishop Tomline's Elements.*)

Bishop Tomline, however, and the high Episcopalians of the Church of England, contend for an original distinction in the office and order of bishops and presbyters, in which notion they are contradicted by one who may be truly called the founder of the Church of England, Arch-

bishop Cranmer, who says, "The bishops and priests were at one time, and were not two things; but both one office in the beginning of Christ's religion." (*Stillingfleet's Irenicum*, p. 392.)

On the subject of THE CHURCH itself, opinions as opposite or varying as possible have been held, down from that of the papists, who contend for its visible unity throughout the world under a visible head, to that of the Independents, who consider the universal Church as composed of congregational Churches, each perfect in itself, and entirely independent of every other.

The first opinion is manifestly contradicted by the language of the apostles, who, while they teach that there is but one Church, composed of believers throughout the world, think it not at all inconsistent with this to speak of "the Churches of Judea," "of Achaia," "the seven Churches of Asia," "the Church at Ephesus," &c. Among themselves the apostles had no common head; but planted Churches and gave directions for their government, in most cases without any apparent correspondence with each other. The popish doctrine is certainly not found in their writings, and so far were they from making provision for the government of this one supposed Church, by the appointment of one visible and exclusive head, that they provide for the future government of the respective Churches raised up by them, in a totally different manner, that is, by the ordination of ministers for each Church, who are indifferently called bishops, and presbyters, and pastors. The only unity of which they speak is the unity of the whole Church in Christ, the invisible Head, by faith; and the unity produced by "fervent love toward each other." Nor has the popish doctrine of the visible unity of the Church any countenance from early antiquity. The best ecclesiastical historians have showed, that, through the greater part of the second century, "the Christian Churches were independent of each other. Each Christian assembly was a little state governed by its own laws, which were either enacted, or at least approved by the society. But in process of time, all the Churches of a province were formed into one large ecclesiastical body, which, like confederate states, assembled at certain times in order to deliberate about the common interests of the whole." (*Mosheim's Ecclesiastical History*, cent. 2, chap. ii.) So far indeed this union of Churches appears to have been a wise and useful arrangement, although afterward it was carried to an injurious extreme, until finally it gave birth to the assumptions of the bishop of Rome, as universal bishop; a claim, however, which when most successful, was but partially submitted to, the Eastern Churches having always maintained their independence. No very large association of Churches of any kind existed till toward the close of the second century, which sufficiently refutes the papal argument from antiquity.

The independence of the early Christian Churches does not, however,

appear to have resembled that of the Churches which in modern times are called Independent. During the lives of the apostles and evangelists, they were certainly subject to their counsel and control, which proves that the independency of separate societies was not the first form of the Church. It may, indeed, be allowed, that some of the smaller and more insulated Churches might, after the death of the apostles and evangelists, retain this form for some considerable time; but the larger Churches, in the chief cities, and those planted in populous neighbourhoods, had many presbyters, and as the members multiplied, they had several separate assemblies or congregations, yet all under the same common government. And when Churches were raised up in the neighbourhood of cities, the appointment of *chorepiscopi*, or country bishops, and of visiting presbyters, both acting under the presbytery of the city, with its bishop at its head, is sufficiently in proof, that the ancient Churches, especially the larger and more prosperous of them, existed in that form, which in modern times we should call a religious connection, subject to a common government. This appears to have arisen out of the very circumstance of the increase of the Church, through the zeal of the first Christians; and in the absence of all direction by the apostles, that every new society of believers raised should be formed into an independent Church, it was doubtless much more in the spirit of the very first discipline exercised by the apostles and evangelists, (when none of the Churches were independent, but remained under the government of those who had been chiefly instrumental in raising them up,) to place themselves under a common inspection, and to unite the weak with the strong, and the newly converted with those who were "in Christ before them." There was also in this, greater security afforded both for the continuance of wholesome doctrine, and of godly discipline.

The persons appointed to feed and govern the Church of Christ being, then, as we have seen, those who are called "*pastors*," a word which imports both *care* and *government*, two other subjects claim our attention,—the share which the body of the people have in their own government by their pastors, and the objects toward which the power of government, thus established, in the Church, is legitimately directed.

As to the first, some preliminary observations may be necessary.

1. When Churches are professedly connected with, and exclusively patronized and upheld by, the state, questions of ecclesiastical government arise, which are of greater perplexity and difficulty than when they are left upon their original ground, as voluntary and spiritual associations. The state will not exclusively recognize ministers without maintaining some control over their functions; and will not lend its aid to enforce the canons of an established Church, without reserving to itself some right of appeal, or of interposition. Hence a contest between the civil and ecclesiastical powers often springs up, and one at least gene

rally feels itself to be fettered by the other. When an established Church is perfectly tolerant, and the state allows freedom of dissent and separation from it without penalties, these evils are much mitigated. But it is not my design to consider a Church as at all allied with the state; but as deriving nothing from it except protection, and that general countenance which the influence of a government, professing Christianity and recognizing its laws, must afford.

2. The only view in which the sacred writers of the New Testament appear to have contemplated the Churches, was that of associations founded upon conviction of the truth of Christianity, and the obligatory nature of the commands of Christ. They considered the pastors as dependent for their support upon the free contributions of the people; and the people as bound to sustain, love, and obey them in all things lawful, that is, in all things agreeable to the doctrine they had received in the Scriptures, and, in things indifferent, to pay respectful deference to them. They enjoined it upon the pastors to "rule well," "diligently," and with fidelity, in executing the directions they had given them;—to silence all teachers of false doctrines, and their adherents;—to reprove unruly and immoral members of the Church, and, if incorrigible, to put them away. On the other hand, should any of their pastors or teachers err in doctrine, the people are enjoined not "to receive them," to "turn away" from them, and not even to bid them "God speed." The rule which forbids Christians "to eat," that is, to communicate at the Lord's table with an immoral "brother," held, of course, good, when that brother was a pastor. Thus pastors were put by them under the influence of the public opinion of the Churches; and the remedy of separating from them, in manifest defections of doctrine and morals, was afforded to the sound members of a Church, should no power exist, able or inclined to silence the offending pastor and his party. In all this, principles were recognized, which, had they not been in future times lost sight of or violated, would have done much, perhaps every thing, to preserve some parts of the Church, at least, in soundness of faith, and purity of manners. A perfect religious liberty is always supposed by the apostles to exist among Christians; no compulsion of the civil power is any where assumed by them as the basis of their advices or directions; no binding of the members to one Church, without liberty to join another, by any ties but those involved in moral considerations, of sufficient weight, however, to prevent the evils of faction and schism. It was this which created a natural and competent check upon the ministers of the Church; for being only sustained by the opinion of the Churches, they could not but have respect to it; and it was this which gave to the sound part of a fallen Church the advantage of renouncing, upon sufficient and well-weighed grounds, their communion with it, and of kindling up the light of a pure ministry and a holy discipline, by forming a separate asso-

ciation, bearing its testimony against errors in doctrine, and failures in practice. Nor is it to be conceived, that, had this simple principle of perfect religious liberty been left unviolated through subsequent ages, the Church could ever have become so corrupt, or with such difficulty and slowness have been recovered from its fall. This ancient Christian liberty has happily been restored in a few parts of Christendom.

3. In places where now the communion with particular Churches, as to human authority, is perfectly voluntary, and liberty of conscience is unfettered, it often happens that questions of Church government are argued on the assumption that the governing power in such Churches is of the same character, and tends to the same results, as where it is connected with civil influence, and is upheld by the power of the state.

Nothing can be more fallacious, and no instrument has been so powerful as this in the hands of the restless and factious, to delude the unwary. Those who possess the governing power in such Churches, are always under the influence of public opinion to an extent unfelt in establishments. They can enforce nothing felt to be oppressive to the members in general without dissolving the society itself; and their utmost power exténds to excision from the body, which, unlike the sentences of excommunication in state Churches, is wholly unconnected with civil penalties. If, then, a resistance is created to any regulations among the major part of any such religious community, founded on a sense of their injurious operation, or to the manner of their enforcement; and if that feeling be the result of a settled conviction, and not the effervescence of temporary mistake and excitement, a change must necessarily ensue, or the body at large be disturbed or dissolved: if, on the other hand, this feeling be the work of a mere faction, partial tumults or separation may take place, and great moral evil may result to the factious parties, but the body will retain its communion, which will be a sufficient proof that the governing power has been the subject of ungrounded and uncharitable attack, since otherwise the people at large must have felt the evils of the general regulations or administration complained of. The very terms often used in the grand controversy arising out of the struggle for the establishment of religious liberty with national and intolerant Churches, are not generally appropriate to such discussions as may arise in voluntary religious societies, although they are often employed, either carelessly or *ad captandum*, to serve the purposes of faction.

4. It is also an important general observation, that, in settling the government of a Church, there are pre-existent laws of Christ, which it is not in the option of any to receive or to reject. Under whatever form the governing power is arranged, it is so bound to execute all the rules left by Christ and his apostles, as to doctrine, worship, the sacraments, and discipline, honestly interpreted, that it is not at liberty to

take that office, or to continue to exercise it, if by any restrictions imposed upon it, it is prevented from carrying these laws into effect. As in the state, so in the Church, government is an ordinance of God; and as it is imperative upon rulers in the state to be "a terror to evil doers, and a praise to them that do well," so also is it imperative upon the rulers of the Church to banish strange doctrines, to uphold God's ordinances, to reprove and rebuke, and, finally, to put away evil doers. The spirit in which this is to be done is also prescribed. It is to be done in the spirit of meekness, and with long suffering; but the work must be done upon the responsibility of the pastors to Him who has commissioned them for this purpose; and they have a right to require from the people, that in this office and ministry they should not only not be obstructed, but affectionately and zealously aided, as ministering in these duties, sometimes painful, not for themselves, but for the good of the whole. With respect to the members of a Church, the same remark is applicable as to the members of a state. It is not matter of option with them whether they will be under government according to the laws of Christ or not, for that is imperative; government in both cases being of Divine appointment. They have, on the other hand, the right to full security, that they shall be governed by the laws of Christ; and they have a right too to establish as many guards against human infirmity and passion in those who are "set over them," as may be prudently devised, provided these are not carried to such an extent as to be obstructive to the legitimate Scriptural discharge of their duties. The true view of the case appears to be, that the government of the Church is in its pastors, open to various modifications as to form; and that it is to be conducted with such a concurrence of the people, as shall constitute a sufficient guard against abuse, and yet not prevent the legitimate and efficient exercise of pastoral duties, as these duties are stated in the Scriptures. This original authority in the pastors, and concurrent consent in the people, may be thus applied to particular cases:—

1. As to the ordination of ministers. If we consult the New Testament, this office was never conveyed by the people. The apostles were ordained by our Lord; the evangelists, by the apostles; the elders in every Church, both by apostles and evangelists. The passage which has been chiefly urged by those who would originate the ministry from the people, is Acts xiv, 23, where the historian, speaking of St. Paul and Barnabas, says, "And when they had ordained (χειροτονήσαντες) elders in every Church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord." Here, because χειροτονειν originally signified to choose by way of suffrage, some have argued that these elders were appointed by the suffrages of the people. Long, however, before the time of St. Luke, this word was used for simple designation, without any reference to election by suffrages; and so it is employed by St. Luke

himself in the same book, Acts x, 41, "Witnesses *foreappointed* of God," where of course the suffrages of men are out of the question. It is also fatal to the argument drawn from the text, that the act implied in the word, whatever it might be, was not the act of the people, but that of Paul and Barnabas. Even the deacons, whose appointment is mentioned Acts vi, although "looked out" by the disciples as men of honest report, did not enter upon their office till solemnly "appointed" thereto by the apostles. Nothing is clearer in the New Testament, than that all the candidates for the ministry were judged of by those who had been placed in that office themselves, and received their appointment from them. Such too was the practice of the primitive Churches after the death of both apostles and evangelists. Presbyters, who during the life of the apostles had the power of ordination, (for they laid their hands upon Timothy,) continued to perform that office in discharge of one solemn part of their duty, to perpetuate the ministry, and to provide for the wants of the Churches. In the times of the apostles, who were endued with special gifts, the concurrence of the people was not, perhaps, always formally taken; but the directions to Timothy and Titus imply a reference to the judgment of the members of the Church, because from them only it could be learned whether the party fixed upon for ordination possessed those qualifications without which ordination was prohibited. When the Churches assumed a more regular form, "the people were always present at ordinations, and ratified the action with their approbation and consent. To this end the bishop was wont before every ordination to publish the names of those who were to have holy orders conferred upon them, that so the people, who best knew their lives and conversation, might interpose if they had any thing material to object against them." (*Cave's Primitive Christianity.*) Sometimes also they nominated them by suffrages, and thus proposed them for ordination. The mode in which the people shall be made a concurrent party is matter of prudential regulation; but they had an early, and certainly a reasonable right to a voice in the appointment of their ministers, although the power of ordination was vested in ministers alone, to be exercised on their responsibility to Christ.

2. As to the laws by which the Church is to be governed. So far as they are manifestly laid down in the word of God, and not regulations judged to be subsidiary thereto, it is plain that the rulers of a Church are bound to execute them, and the people to obey them. They cannot be matter of compact on either side, except as the subject of a mutual and solemn engagement to defer to them without any modification or appeal to any other standard.

Every Church declares in some way, how it understands the doctrine and the disciplinary laws of Christ. This declaration as to doctrine, in modern times, is made by confessions or articles of faith, in which, if

fundamental error is found, the evil rests upon the head of that Church collectively, and upon the members individually, every one of whom is bound to try all doctrines by the Holy Scriptures, and cannot support an acknowledged system of error without guilt. As to discipline, the manner in which a Church provides for public worship, the publication of the Gospel, the administration of the sacraments, the instruction of the ignorant, the succour of the distressed, the admonition of the disorderly, and the excision of offenders, (which are all points on which the New Testament has issued express injunctions,) is its declaration of the manner in which it interprets those injunctions, which also it does on its own collective responsibility, and that of its members. If, however, we take for illustration of the subject before us, a Church at least substantially right in this its interpretation of doctrine, and of the laws of Christ as to general, and what we may call, for distinction's sake, *moral* discipline; these are the first principles upon which this Church is founded. It is either an apostolic Church, which has retained primitive faith and discipline; or it has subsequently been collected into a new communion, on account of the fall of other Churches; and has placed itself, according to its own conviction, upon the basis of primitive doctrine and discipline as found in the Scriptures. On this ground either the pastors and people met and united at first; or the people, converted to faith and holiness by the labours of one or more pastors, holding, as they believe, these Scriptural views, placed themselves under the guidance of these pastors, and thus formed themselves into a Church state, which was their act of accession to these principles. It is clear, therefore, that by this very act, they bind themselves to comply with the original terms of the communion into which they have entered, and that they have as to these doctrines, and as to these disciplinary laws of Christ, which are to be preached and enforced, no rights of control over ministers, which shall prevent the just exercise of their office in these respects. They have a right to such regulations and checks as shall secure, in the best possible way, the just and faithful exercise of that office, and the honest and impartial use of that power; but this is the limit of their right; and every system of suffrages, or popular concurrence, which, under pretence of guarding against abuse of ministerial authority, makes its exercise *absolutely* and in *all cases* dependent upon the consent of those over whom it extends, goes beyond that limit, and invades the right of pastoral government, which the New Testament has established. It brings, in a word, the laws of Christ into debate, which yet the members profess to have received as their rule; and it claims to put into commission those duties which pastors are charged by Christ personally to exercise. The Apostle Paul, had the incestuous person at Corinth denied the crime, and there had been any doubtfulness as to the fact, would unquestionably have taken the opinion of the elders of that Church

and others upon that fact; but when it became a question whether the *laws* of Christ's discipline should be exercised or not, he did not feel himself concluded by the sense of the whole Corinthian Church, which was in favour of the offender continuing in communion with them; but he instantly reproved them for their laxity, and issued the sentence of excision, thereby showing that an obvious law of Christ was not to be subjected to the decision of a majority.

This view indeed supposes, that such a society, like almost all the Churches ever known, has admitted in the first instance, that the power of admission into the Church, of reproof, of exhortation, and of excision from it, subject to various guards against abuses, is in the pastors of a Church. There are some who have adopted a different opinion, supposing that the power of administering the discipline of Christ must be conveyed by them to their ministers, and is to be wholly controlled by their suffrages; so that there is in these systems, not a provision of counsel against possible errors in the exercise of authority; not a guard against human infirmity or viciousness; not a reservation of right to determine upon the fitness of the cases to which the laws of Christ are applied; but a claim of co-administration as to these laws themselves, or rather an entire administration of them through the pastor, as a passive agent of their will. Those who adopt these views are bound to show that this is the state of things established in the New Testament. That it is not, appears plain from the very term "pastors," which imports both care and government; mild and affectionate government indeed, but still government. Hence the office of shepherd is applied to describe the government of God, and the government of kings. It appears too, from other titles given, not merely to apostles, but to the presbyters they ordained and placed over the Churches. They are called ἡγουμενοι, rulers; επισκοποι, overseers; προεστωτες, those who preside. They are commended for "ruling well;" and they are directed "to charge," "to reprove," "to rebuke," "to watch," "to silence," "to put away." The very "account" they must give to God, in connection with the discharge of these duties, shows that their office and responsibility was peculiar and personal, and much greater than that of any private member of the Church, which it could not be if they were the passive agents only in matters of doctrine and discipline of the will of the whole. To the double duty of *feeding* and exercising the *oversight* of the flock, a special reward is also promised when the "*Chief Shepherd* shall appear,"—a title of Christ, which shows that as the pastoral office of feeding and ruling is exercised by Christ supremely, so it is exercised by his ministers in both branches subordinately. Finally, the exhortations to Christians to "obey them that have the rule over them," and to "submit" to them, and "to esteem them very highly for their works' sake," and to "remember them;"—all show that the ministerial

office is not one of mere agency, under the absolute direction of the votes of the collected Church.

3. With respect to other disciplinary regulations, supposed by any religious society to be subsidiary to the great and Scriptural ends of Church communion, these appear to be matters of mutual agreement, and are capable of modification by the mutual consent of ministers and people, under their common responsibility to Christ, that they are done advisedly, with prayer, with reference to the edification of the Church, and so as not to infringe upon, but to promote, the influence of the doctrines, duties, and spirit of the Gospel. The consent of the people to all such regulations, either tacitly by their adoption of them, or more expressly through any regular meetings of different officers, who may be regarded as acquainted with, and representing the sentiments of the whole; as also by the approval of those aged, wise, and from different causes, influential persons, who are to be found in all societies and who are always, whether in office or not, their natural guardians, guides, and representatives, is necessary to confidence and harmony, and a proper security for good and orderly government. It is thus that those to whom the government or well ordering of the Church is committed, and those upon whom their influence and Scriptural authority exert themselves, appear to be best brought into a state of harmony and mutual confidence; and that abundant security is afforded against all misrule, seeing that in a voluntary communion, and where perfect liberty exists for any member to unite himself to other Churches, or for any number of them to arrange themselves into a new community, subject however to the moral cautions of the New Testament against the schismatic spirit, it can never be the interest of those with whom the regulation of the affairs of a Church is lodged, voluntarily to adopt measures which can be generally felt to be onerous and injurious, nor is it practicable to persevere in them. In this method of bringing in the concurrence of the people, all assemblages of whole societies, or very large portions of them, are avoided,—a popular form of Church government, which, however it were modified so as best to accord with the Scriptural authority of ministers, could only be tolerable in very small isolated societies, and that in the times of their greatest simplicity and love. To raise into legislators and censors all the members of a Church, the young, the ignorant, and the inexperienced, is to do them great injury. It is the sure way to foster debates, contentions, and self confidence, to open the door to intrigue and policy, to tempt forward and conceited men to become a kind of religious demagogues, and entirely to destroy the salutary influence of the aged, experienced, and gifted members, by referring every decision to members and suffrages, and placing all that is good and venerable, and influential among the members themselves, at the feet of a democracy.

4. As to the power of admission into the Church, that is clearly with ministers, to whom the office of baptism is committed, by which the door is opened into the Church universal; and as there can be no visible communion kept up with the universal Church, except by communion with some particular Church, the admission into that particular communion must be in the hands of ministers, because it is one of the duties of their office, made such by the Scripture itself, to enjoin this mode of confessing Christ, by assembling with his saints in worship, by submitting to discipline, and by "showing forth his death" at the Lord's Supper. We have, however, already said, that the members of a Church, although they have no right to obstruct the just exercise of this power, have the right to prevent its being unworthily exercised; and their concurrence with the admission, tacit or declared, according to their usages, is an arrangement, supported by analogies, drawn from the New Testament, and from primitive antiquity. The expulsion of unworthy members, after admonition, devolves upon those to whom the administration of the sacraments, the signs of communion, is entrusted, and therefore upon ministers, for this reason, that as "shepherds" of the flock under the "Chief Shepherd," they are charged to carry his laws into effect. These laws, it is neither with them nor with the people to modify; they are already declared by superior authority; but the determination of the facts of the case to which they are to be applied, is matter of mutual investigation and decision, in order to prevent an erring or an improper exercise of authority. That such investigation should take place, not before the assembled members of a society, but before proper and select tribunals, appears not only an obviously proper, but, in many respects, a necessary regulation.

The trial of unworthy ministers remains to be noticed, which, wherever a number of religious societies exist as one Church, having therefore many pastors, is manifestly most safely placed in the hands of those pastors themselves, and that not only because the official acts of censure and exclusion lie with them, but for other reasons also. It can scarcely happen that a minister should be under accusation, except in some very particular cases, but that, from his former influence, at least with a part of the people, some faction would be found to support him. In proportion to the ardour of this feeling, the other party would be excited to undue severity and bitterness. To try such a case before a whole society, there would not only be the same objection as in the case of private members; but the additional one, that parties would be more certainly formed, and be still more violent. If he must be arraigned then before some special tribunal, the most fitting is that of his brethren, provided that the parties accusing have the right to bring on such a trial upon exhibition of probable evidence, and to prosecute it without obstruction. In Churches whose ministers are thrown solely upon the

public opinion of the society, and exist as such only by their character, this is ordinarily a sufficient guard against the toleration of improper conduct; while it removes the trial from those whose excitement for or against the accused might on either side be unfavourable to fair and equitable decision, and to the peace of the Church.

The above remarks contain but a sketch of those principles of Church government which appear to be contained in, or to be suggested by, the New Testament. They still leave much liberty to Christians to adopt them in detail to the circumstances in which they are placed. The offices to be created; the meetings necessary for the management of the various affairs of the Church, spiritual and financial; the assembling of ministers in larger or smaller numbers for counsel, and for oversight of each other, and of the Churches to which they belong, are all matters of this kind, and are left to the suggestions of wisdom and piety. The extent to which distinct societies of Christians shall associate in one Church, under a common government, appears also to be a matter of prudence and of circumstances. In the primitive Church we see different societies in a city and its neighbourhood under the common government of the assembly of presbyters; and afterward these grew into provincial Churches, of greater or smaller extent. In modern times, we have similar associations in the form of national Churches, Episcopal or Presbyterian; and of Churches existing without any recognition of the state at all, and forming smaller or larger communities, from the union of a few societies, to the union of societies throughout a whole country; holding the same doctrines, practising the same modes of worship, and placing themselves under a common code of laws and a common government. But whatever be the form they take, they are bound to respect, and to model themselves by, the *principles* of Church communion and of Church discipline which are contained in the New Testament; and they will be fruitful in holiness and usefulness, so long as they conform to them, and so long as those forms of administration are conscientiously preferred which appear best adapted to preserve and to diffuse sound doctrine, Christian practice, spirituality, and charity. That discipline is defective and bad in itself, or it is ill administered, which does not accomplish these ends; and that is best which best promotes them.

The ENDS to which Church authority is legitimately directed remain to be briefly considered.

The first is, the preservation and the publication of "sound *doctrine*." Against false doctrines, and the men "of corrupt minds" who taught them, the sermons of Christ, and the writings of the apostles, abound in cautions; and since St. Paul lays it down as a rule, as to erring teachers, that their "mouths must be stopped," this implies, that the power of declaring what sound doctrine is, and of silencing false teachers, was

confided by the apostles to the future Church. By systematic writers this has been called *potestas* δογματικη; which, abused by the ambition of man forms no small part of that antichristian usurpation which characterizes the Church of Rome. Extravagant as are her claims, so that she brings in her traditions as of equal authority with the inspired writings, and denies to men the right of private judgment, and of trying her dogmas by the test of the Holy Scriptures; there is a sober sense in which this power may be taken. The great Protestant principle, that the Holy Scriptures are the only standard of doctrine; that the doctrines of every Church must be proved out of them; and that to this standard every individual member has the right of bringing them, in order to the confirmation of his own faith, must be held inviolate, if we would not see Divine authority displaced by human. Since, however, men may come to different conclusions upon the meaning of Scripture, it has been the practice from primitive times to declare the sense in which Scripture is understood by collective assemblies of ministers, and by the Churches united with them, in order to the enforcement of such interpretations upon Christians generally, by the influence of learning, piety, numbers, and solemn deliberation. The reference of the question respecting circumcision by the Church at Antioch to "the apostles and elders at Jerusalem," is the first instance of this, though with this peculiarity, that, in this case, the decision was given under plenary inspiration. While one of the apostles lived, an appeal could be made to him in like manner when any doctrinal novelty sprung up in the Church. After their death, smaller or larger councils, composed of the public teachers of the Churches, were resorted to, that they might pronounce upon these differences of opinion, and by their authority confirm the faithful, and abash the propagators of error. Still later, four councils, called general, from the number of persons assembled in them from various parts of Christendom, have peculiar eminence. The council of Nice, in the fourth century, which condemned the Arian heresy, and formed that Scriptural and important formulary called the Nicene Creed; the council of Constantinople, held at the end of the same century, which condemned the errors of Macedonius, and asserted the Divinity and personality of the Holy Ghost; and the councils of Ephesus and Chalcedon, about the middle of the fifth century, which censured the opinions of Nestorius and Eutyches. At Nice it was declared that the Son is truly God, of the same substance with the Father; at Constantinople, that the Holy Ghost is also truly God; at Ephesus, that the Divine nature was truly united to the human in Christ, in *one* person; at Chalcedon, that both natures remained *distinct*, and that the human nature was not lost or absorbed in the Divine. The decisions of these councils, both from their antiquity and from the manifest conformity of their decisions on these points to the Holy Scriptures, have been received to this

day in what have been called the orthodox Churches, throughout the world. On general councils, the Romish Church has been divided as to the questions, whether infallibility resides in them, or in the pope, or in the pope when at their head. Protestants cut this matter short by acknowledging that they have erred, and may err, being composed of fallible men, and that they have no authority but as they manifestly agree with the Scriptures. To the above-mentioned councils they have in general always paid great deference, as affording confirmation of the plain and literal sense of Scripture on the points in question; but on no other ground. "Things ordained by general councils as necessary to salvation, have neither strength nor authority, unless it may be declared they be taken out of Holy Scripture." (*Twenty-first Article of the Church of England.*) The manner in which the respective Churches of the reformation declared their doctrinal interpretation of the Scriptures on the leading points of theology, was by confessions and articles of faith, and by the adoption of ancient or primitive creeds. With reference to this practice, no doubt it is, that the Church of England declares in her twentieth article, that "the Church hath authority in controversies of faith;" but qualifies the tenet by adding, "and yet it is not lawful for the Church to ordain any thing that is contrary to God's word written;" in which there is a manifest recognition of the right of all who have God's word in their hands, to make use of it in order to try what any Church "ordains," as necessary to be believed. This authority of a Church in matters of doctrine appears then to be reduced to the following particulars, which, although directly opposed to the assumptions of the Church of Rome, are of great importance:—1. To declare the sense in which it interprets the language of Scripture on all the leading doctrines of the Christian revelation; for to contend, as some have done, that no creeds or articles of faith are proper, but that belief in the Scriptures only ought to be required, would be to destroy all doctrinal distinctions, since the most perverse interpreters of Scripture profess to believe the words of Scripture. 2. To require from all its members, with whom the right of private judgment is by all Protestant Churches left inviolate, to examine such declarations of faith professing to convey the sense of Scripture with modesty and proper respect to those grave and learned assemblies in which all these points have been weighed with deliberation; receiving them as guides to truth, not implicitly, it is true, but still with docility and humility. "Great weight and deference is due to such decisions, and every man that finds his own thoughts differ from them ought to examine the matter over again with much attention and care, freeing himself all he can from prejudice and obstinacy, with a just distrust of his own understanding, and an humble respect to the judgment of his superiors. This is due to the consideration of peace and union, and to that authority which the Church has to maintain it;

but if, after all possible methods of inquiry, a man cannot master his thoughts, or make them agree with the public decisions, his conscience is not under bonds, since this authority is not absolute, nor grounded upon a promise of infallibility." (*Burnet.*) 3. To silence within its own pale the preaching of all doctrines contrary to the received standards. On this every Church has a right to insist which sincerely believes that contrary doctrines to its own are fundamental or dangerous errors, and which is thereby bound both to keep its members from their contamination, and also to preserve them from those distractions and controversies to which the preaching of diverse doctrines by its ministers would inevitably lead. Nor is there any thing in the exercise of this authority contrary to Christian liberty, since the members of any communion, and especially the ministers, know beforehand the terms of fellowship with the Churches whose confessions of faith are thus made public; and because also, where conscience is unfettered by public law, they are neither prevented from enjoying their own opinions in peace, nor from propagating them in other assemblies.

The second end is, the forming of such *regulations* for the conduct of its ministers, officers, and members, as shall establish a common order for worship; facilitate the management of the affairs of the community, spiritual, economical, and financial; and give a right direction to the general conduct of the whole society. This in technical language is called *potestas διατακτικη*, and consists in making *canons*, or *rules*, for those particular matters which are not provided for in detail by the directions of Scripture. This power also, like the former, has been carried to a culpable excess in many Churches, so as to fill them with superstition, and in many respects to introduce an onerous system of observances, like that of Judaism, the yoke from which the Gospel has set us free. The simplicity of Christianity has thus been often destroyed, and the "doctrines of men" set up "as commandments of God." At the same time, there is a sound sense in which this power in a Church must be admitted, and a deference to it bound upon the members. For, when the laws of Christ are both rightly understood and cordially admitted, the application of them to particular cases is still necessary; many regulations also are dictated by inference and by analogies, and often appear to be required by the *spirit* of the Gospel, for which there is no provision in the letter of Scripture. The obligation of public worship, for instance, is plainly stated; but the seasons of its observance, its frequency, and the mode in which it is to be conducted, must be matter of special regulation, in order that all things may be done "decently and in order." The observance of the Sabbath is binding; but particular rules guarding against such acts, as in the judgment of a Church are violations of the law of the Sabbath, are often necessary to direct the judgment and consciences of the body of the people. Baptism is to be adminis-

tered; but the manner of this service may be prescribed by a Church, since the Scriptures have not determined it. So also as to the mode and the times of receiving the Lord's Supper, in the same absence of inspired directions regulations must be agreed upon, that there may be, as nearly as edification requires, an undistracted uniformity of practice. Special festivals of commemoration and thanksgivings may also be appointed, as fit occasions for the inculcation of particular truths, and moral duties, and for the special excitement of grateful affections. For although they are not particularly prescribed in Scripture, they are in manifest accordance with its spirit, and are sanctioned by many of the examples which it exhibits. Days of fasting and humiliation, for the same reasons, may be the subject of appointment; and beside the regular acts of public worship, private meetings of the members for mutual prayer and religious converse may also be found necessary. To these may be added, various plans for the instruction of children, the visitation and relief of the sick, and the introduction of the Gospel into neglected neighbourhoods, and its promotion in foreign lands. A considerable number of other regulations touching order, contributions, the repressing of particular vices which may mark the spirit of the times, and the practice of particular duties, will also be found necessary.

The only legitimate ends, however, of all these directions and rules, are, the edification of the Church; the preservation of its practical purity; the establishment of an influential order and decorum in its services; and the promotion of its usefulness to the world. The general principles by which they are to be controlled, are the *spirituality, simplicity*, and *practical character* of Christianity; and the authority with which they are invested, is derived from piety, wisdom, and singleness of heart, in those who originate them, and from that docility and submissiveness of Christians to each other, which is enforced upon them in the New Testament. For although every Christian is exhorted to "try all things," to "search the Scriptures," and to exercise his best judgment, in matters which relate to doctrine, discipline, and practice, yet he is to do this in the spirit of a Christian; not with self willedness, and self confidence; not contemning the opinion and authority of others; not factiously and censoriously. This is his duty even where the most important subjects are in question; how much more then in things comparatively indifferent ought he to practise the apostolic rule: "Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder; yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility."

The third end of Church government is the infliction and removal of censurers, a power (*potestas* διακριτικη) the abuse of which, and the extravagant lengths to which it has been carried, have led some wholly to deny it, or to treat it slightly; but which is nevertheless deposited with every Scriptural Church. Even associations much less solemn and

spiritual in their character, have the power to put away their members, and to receive again, upon certain conditions, those who offend against their rules; and if the offence which called forth this expulsion be of a moral nature, the censure of a whole society, inflicted after due examination, comes with much greater weight, and is a much greater reproach and misfortune to the person who falls under it, than that of a private individual. In the case of a Christian Church, however, the proceeding connects itself with a higher than human authority. The members have separated from the world, and have placed themselves under the laws of Christ. They stand in a special relation to him, so long as they are faithful; they are objects of his care and love, as members of his own body; and to them, as such, great and numerous promises are made. To preserve them in this state of fidelity, to guard them from errors of doctrine and viciousness of practice, and thus to prevent their separation from Christ, the Church with its ministry, its ordinances, and its discipline was established. He who becomes unfaithful in opposition to the influence of those edifying and conservatory means, forfeits the favour of Christ, even before he is deservedly separated from the Church; but when he is separated, put away, denied communion with the Church, he loses also the benefit of all those peculiar means of grace and salvation, and of those special influences and promises which Christ bestows upon the Church. He is not only thrown back upon common society with shame, stigmatized as an "evil worker," by the solemn sentence of a religious tribunal; but becomes, so to speak, again a member of that incorporated and hostile society, THE WORLD, against which the exclusive and penal sentences of the word of God are directed. Where the sentence of excision by a Church is erring or vicious, as it may be in some cases, it cannot affect an innocent individual; he would remain, notwithstanding the sentence of men, a member of Christ's invisible universal Church; but when it proceeds upon a just application of the laws of Christ, there can be no doubt of its ratification in heaven, although the door is left open to penitence and restoration.

In proportion, however, as a sober and serious Christian, having those views, wishes to keep up in his own mind, and in the minds of others, a proper sense of the weight and solemnity of Church censures when rightly administered, he will feel disgusted at those assumptions of control over the mercy and justice of God, which fallible men have in some Churches endeavoured to establish, and have too often exercised for the gratification of the worst passions. So because our Lord said to Peter, "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven," and "whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven," which is also said Matt. xviii, 18, to all the apostles, "it came to be

understood that the sentence of excommunication, by its own intrinsic authority, condemned to eternal punishment; that the excommunicated person could not be delivered from this condemnation, unless the Church gave him absolution; and that the Church had the power of absolving him upon the private confession of his fault, either by prescribing to him certain acts of penance, and works of charity, the performance of which was considered as a satisfaction for the sin which he had committed, or by applying to him the merits of some other person. And as in the progress of corruption, the whole power of the Church was supposed to be lodged in the pope, there flowed from him, at his pleasure, indulgences or remissions of some parts of the penance, absolutions, and pardons, the possession of which was represented to Christians as essential to salvation, and the sale of which formed a most gainful traffic."

As to the passage respecting the gift of the KEYS of the kingdom of heaven to Peter, from which these views affect to be derived, it is most naturally explained by the very apposite and obviously explanatory fact, that this apostle was the first preacher of the Gospel dispensation in its perfected form, both to the Jews at the day of pentecost, and afterward to the Gentiles. Bishop Horsley applies it only to the latter of these events, to which indeed it may principally, but not exclusively, refer.

"St. Peter's custody of the keys was a temporary, not a perpetual authority: its object was not individuals, but the whole human race. The kingdom of heaven upon earth is the true Church of God. It is now therefore the Christian Church: formerly the Jewish Church was that kingdom. The true Church is represented in this text, as in many passages of Holy Writ, under the image of a walled city, to be entered only at the gates. Under the Mosaic economy these gates were shut, and particular persons only could obtain admittance,—Israelites by birth, or by legal incorporation. The locks of these gates were the rites of the Mosaic law, which obstructed the entrance of aliens. But, after our Lord's ascension, and the descent of the Holy Ghost, the keys of the city were given to St. Peter, by that vision which taught him, and authorized him to teach others, that all distinctions of one nation from another were at an end. By virtue of this special commission, the great apostle applied the key, pushed back the bolt of the lock, and threw the gates of the city open for the admission of the whole Gentile world, in the instance of Cornelius and his family." (*Horsley's Sermons.*)

When the same learned prelate would also refer the binding and loosing power mentioned in the above texts exclusively to Peter, he forgets that in the passage above referred to, Matt. xviii, 18, it is given to all the apostles, "Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." These expressions manifestly refer to the authoritative de-

claration of any thing to be obligatory, and its infraction to be sinful, and therefore subject to punishment, or the contrary; and the passage receives sufficient illustration from the words of our Lord to his apostles, after his resurrection, when, after breathing upon them, he said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whosesoever sins ye remit, they are remitted to them; and whosesoever sins ye retain, they are retained," John xx, 22, 23. To qualify them for this authoritative declaration of what was *obligatory* upon men, or otherwise; and of the *terms* upon which sins are "remitted," and the circumstances under which they are "retained;" they previously received the Holy Ghost,—a sufficient proof that this power was connected with the plenary inspiration of the apostles; and beyond those inspired men it could not extend, unless equally strong miraculous evidence of the same degree of inspiration were afforded by any others. The manner also in which the apostles exercised this power elucidates the subject. We have no instance at all of their forgiving the sins of any individuals; they merely *proclaimed* the terms of pardon. And we have no instance of their "retaining" the sins of any one, except by *declaring* them condemned by the laws of the Gospel, of which they were the preachers. They authoritatively explain in their writings the terms of forgiveness; they state as to duty what is obligatory, and what is not obligatory, upon Christians; they pronounce sinners of various kinds, impenitent and unbelieving, to be under God's wrath; and they declare certain apostates to be put beyond forgiveness by their own act, not by apostolic excommunication; and thus they bind and loose, remit sins and retain them. The meaning of these passages is in this manner explained by the practice of the apostles themselves, and we may also see the reason why in Matthew xviii, a similar declaration stands connected with the censures of a *Church:* "Moreover, if thy brother trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone; if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the Church; but if he neglect to hear the Church let him be unto thee as a heathen man and as a publican; verily, I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

That here there may be a reference to a provision made among the Jews for settling questions of accusation and dispute by the elders of their synagogues, is probable; but it is also clear that our Lord looked forward to the establishment of his own Church, which was to displace the synagogue; and that there might be infallible rules to guide that Church in its judgment on moral cases, he turns to the disciples, to whom the discourse is addressed, and says to them, "Whatsoever ye,"

not the *Church*, "shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever YE shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." Of the disciples then present the subsequent history leads us to conclude, that he principally meant that the apostles should be endued with this power, and that they were to be the inspired persons who were to furnish "the Church" with infallible rules of judgment, in all such cases of dispute and accusation. When, therefore, any Church rightly interprets these apostolic rules, and rightly applies them to particular cases, it then exercises a discipline which is not only approved, but is also confirmed, in heaven by the concurring dispensations of God, who respects his own inspirations in his apostles. The whole shows the careful and solemn manner in which all such investigations are to be conducted, and the serious effect of them. It is by the admonishing and putting away of offenders, that the Church bears its testimony against all sin before the world; and it is thus that she maintains a salutary influence over her members, by the well-grounded fear of those censures which, when Scripturally administered, are sanctioned by Christ its Head; and which, when they extend to excision from the body, and no error of judgment, or sinister intention, vitiates the proceeding, separate the offenders from that special grace of Christ which is promised to the faithful collected into a Church state,—a loss, an evil, and a danger, which nothing but repentance, humiliation, and a return to God and his people, can repair. For it is to be observed, that this part of discipline is an ordinance of Christ, not only for the maintenance of the character of his Churches, and the preservation of their influence in the world; but for the spiritual benefit of the offenders themselves. To this effect are the words of the Apostle Paul as to the immoral Corinthian,—"to deliver such a one to Satan, for the destruction of *the flesh*," the dominion of his bodily appetites, "that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus." The practice of many of the ancient Churches was, in this respect, rigid; in several of the circumstances far too much so; and thus it assumed a severity much more appalling than in the apostolic times. It shows, however, how deeply the necessity of maintaining moral discipline was felt among them, and in substance, though not in every part of the mode, is worthy of remembrance. "When disciples of Christ, who had dishonoured his religion by committing any gross immorality, or by relapsing into idolatry, were cut off from the Church by the sentence of EXCOMMUNICATION; they were kept, often for years, in a state of penance, however desirous to be re-admitted. They made a public confession of their faith, accompanied with the most humiliating expressions of grief. For some time they stood without the doors, while the Christians were employed in worship. Afterward they were allowed to enter; then to stand during a part of the service; then to remain during the whole: but they were not permitted to partake of

the Lord's Supper, till a formal absolution was pronounced by the Church. The time of the penance was sometimes shortened, when the anguish of their mind, or any occasional distress of body, threatened the danger of their dying in that condition, or when those who were then suffering persecution, or other deserving members of the Church interceded for them, and became, by this intercession, in some measure, sureties for their future good behaviour. The duration of the penance, the acts required while it continued, and the manner of the absolution, varied at different times. The matter was, from its nature, subject to much abuse; it was often taken under the cognizance of ancient councils; and a great part of their canons was employed in regulating the exercise of discipline." (*Hill's Lectures.*)

In concluding this chapter, it may be observed, that however difficult it may be, in some cases, to adjust modes of Church government, so that in the view of all, the principles of the New Testament may be fully recognized, and the ends for which Churches are collected may be effectually accomplished, this labour will always be greatly smoothed, by a steady regard, on each side, to *duties* as well as to *rights*. These are equally imperative upon ministers, upon subordinate officers, and upon the private members of every Church. Charity, candour, humility, public spirit, zeal, a forgiving spirit, and the desire, the strong desire, of unity and harmony, ought to pervade all, as well as a constant remembrance of the great and solemn truth, that Christ is the *Judge*, as well as the *Saviour* of his Churches. While the people are docile; obedient to the word of exhortation; willing to submit, "in the Lord," to those who "preside over them," and are charged to exercise Christ's discipline; and while ministers are "gentle among them," after the example of St. Paul,—a gentleness, however, which, in his case, winked at no evil, and kept back no truth, and compromised no principle, and spared no obstinate and incurable offender,—while they feed the flock of Christ with sound doctrine, and are intent upon their edification, watching over them "as they that must give account," and study, live, and labour, for no other ends, than to present that part of the Church committed to their care "perfect in Christ Jesus;" every Church will fall as it were naturally and without effort into its proper "order." Pure and undefiled religion in Churches, like the first poetry, creates those subordinate rules by which it is, afterward, guarded and governed; and the best canons of both are those which are dictated by the fresh and primitive effusions of their own inspiration.

CHAPTER II.

INSTITUTIONS OF CHRISTIANITY—THE SACRAMENTS.

THE number of sacraments is held by all Protestants to be but two,—*Baptism*, and the *Lord's Supper*; because they find no other instituted in the New Testament, or practised in the early Church. The superstition of the Church of Rome has added no fewer than five to the number,—*Confirmation, penance, orders, matrimony*, and, *extreme unction*.

The word used by the Greek fathers for sacrament was μυστηριον.—In the New Testament this word always means, as Campbell has showed, either a secret,—something unknown till revealed; or the spiritual meaning of some emblem or type. In both these senses it is rendered *sacramentum* in the Vulgate translation, which shows that the latter word was formerly used in a large signification. As the Greek term was employed in the New Testament to express the hidden meaning of an external symbol, as in Revelation i, 20, "the *mystery* of the seven stars," it was naturally applied by early Christians to the symbolical rite of the Lord's Supper; and as some of the most sacred and retired parts of the ancient heathen worship were called *mysteries*, from which all but the initiated were excluded, the use of the same term to designate that most sacred act of Christian worship, which was strictly confined to the approved members of the Church, was probably thought peculiarly appropriate. The Latin word *sacramentum*, in its largest sense, may signify a sacred ceremony; and is the appellation, also, of the military oath of fidelity taken by the Roman soldiers. For both these reasons, probably, the term *sacrament* was adopted by the Latin Christians. For the first, because of the peculiar sacredness of the Lord's Supper; and for the second, because of that engagement to be faithful to the commands of Christ, their heavenly Leader, which was implied in this ordinance, and impressed upon them by so sacred a solemnity. It was, perhaps, from the designation of this ordinance, by the term *sacramentum*, by the Christians whom Pliny examined as to their faith and modes of worship, that he thus expresses himself in his letter to the Emperor Trajan:—"From their affirmations I learned that the sum of all their offence, call it fault or error, was, that on a day fixed they used to assemble before sunrise, and sing together, in alternate responses, hymns to Christ, as a Deity; binding themselves *by the solemn engagements of an oath*, not to commit any manner of wickedness," &c.—The term *sacrament* was also at an early period given to baptism, as well as to the Supper of the Lord, and is now confined among Protestants to these two ordinances only. The distinction between sacra-

ments, and other religious rites, is well stated by Burnet. (*On the Articles.*)

"This difference is to be put between sacraments and other ritual actions; that whereas other rites are badges and distinctions by which Christians are known, a sacrament is more than a bare matter of form; as in the Old Testament, circumcision and propitiatory sacrifices were things of a different nature and order from all the other ritual precepts concerning their cleansings, the distinctions of days, places, and meats. These were, indeed, precepts given them of God; but they were not federal acts of renewing the covenant, or reconciling themselves to God. By circumcision they received the seal of the covenant, and were brought under the obligation of the whole law; they were made by it debtors to it; and when by their sins they had provoked God's wrath, they were reconciled to him by their sacrifices, with which atonement was made, and so their sins were forgiven them; the nature and end of those was, to be federal acts, in the offering of which the Jews kept to their part of the covenant, and in the accepting of which God maintained it on his part; so we see a plain difference between these and a mere rite, which though commanded, yet must pass only for the badge of a profession, as the doing of it is an act of obedience to a Divine law. Now, in the new dispensation, though our Saviour has eased us of that *law* of *ordinances*, that *grievous yoke*, and those *beggarly elements*, which were laid upon the Jews; yet since we are still in the body subject to our senses, and to sensible things, he has appointed some federal actions to be both the visible stipulations and professions of our Christianity, and the conveyancers to us of the blessings of the Gospel."

It is this view of the two sacraments, as federal acts, which sweeps away the five superstitious additions that the temerity of the Church of Rome has dared to elevate to the same rank of sacredness and importance.

As it is usual among men to confirm covenants by visible and solemn forms, and has been so from the most ancient times, so when almighty God was pleased to enter into covenant engagements with men, he condescended to the same methods of affording, on his part, sensible assurances of his fidelity, and to require the same from them. Thus, circumcision was the sign and seal of the covenant with Abraham; and when the great covenant of grace was made in the Son of God with all nations, it was agreeable to this analogy to expect that he would institute some constantly-recurring visible sign, in confirmation of his mercy to us, which should encourage our reliance upon his promises, and have the force of a perpetual renewal of the covenant between the parties. Such is manifestly the character and ends both of the institution of baptism and the Lord's Supper; but as to the five additional

sacraments of the Church of Rome, "they have not any visible sign or ceremony ordained of God," (*Article 25th of the Church of England*,) and they stand in no direct connection with any covenant engagement entered into by him with his creatures. *Confirmation* rests on no Scriptural authority at all. *Penance*, if it mean any thing more than repentance, is equally unsanctioned by Scripture; and if it mean "repentance toward God," it is no more a sacrament than faith. *Orders*, or the ordination of ministers, is an apostolic command, but has in it no greater indication of a sacramental act than any other such command,—say the excommunication of obstinate sinners from the Church, which with just as good a reason might be elevated into a sacrament. *Marriage* appears to have been made by the papists a sacrament for this curious reason, that the Apostle Paul, when speaking of the love and union of husband and wife, and taking occasion from that to allude to the love of Christ to his Church, says, "This is a great *mystery*," which the Vulgate version translates, "SACRAMENTUM *hoc magnum est*:" thus they confound the large and the restricted sense of the word sacrament, and forget that the true "mystery" spoken of by the apostle, lies not in marriage, but in the union of Christ with his people,—"This is a great mystery, *but* I speak concerning Christ and the Church." If, however, the use of the word "mystery" in this passage by St. Paul, were sufficient to prove marriage a sacrament, then the calling of the Gentiles, as Beza observes, might be the eighth sacrament, since St. Paul terms that "a mystery," Eph. i, 9, which the Vulgate, in like manner translates by "*sacramentum*." The last of their sacraments is *extreme unction*, of which it is enough to say that it is nowhere prescribed in Scripture; and if it were, has clearly nothing in it of a sacramental character. The passage in St. James's Epistle to which they refer, cannot serve them at all; for the Romanists use extreme unction only when all hope of recovery is past, whereas the prayers and the anointing mentioned by St. James were resorted to in order to a miraculous cure, for life, and not for death. With them, therefore, extreme unction is called "the sacrament of the dying."

Of the nature of sacraments there are three leading views.

The first is that taken by the Church of Rome.

According to the doctrine of this Church, the sacraments contain the grace they signify, and confer grace, *ex opere operato*, by the work itself, upon such as do not put an obstruction by mortal sin. "For these sensible and natural things," it is declared, "work by the almighty power of God in the sacraments what they could not do by their own power." Nor is any more necessary to this effect, than that the priests, "who make and consecrate the sacraments, have an *intention* of doing what the Church doth, and doth intend to do." (*Conc. Trid. Can.* 11.) According therefore to this doctrine, the matter of the sacrament

derives from the action of the priest, in pronouncing certain words, a Divine virtue, provided it be the intention of the priest to give to that matter such a Divine virtue, and this grace is conveyed to the soul of every person who receives it. Nor is it required of the person receiving a sacrament, that he should exercise any good disposition, or possess faith; for such is conceived to be the *physical virtue* of a sacrament, that, except when opposed by the obstacle of a mortal sin, the act of receiving it is alone sufficient for the experience of its efficacy. This is so capital an article of faith with the Romish Church, that the council of Trent anathematizes all who deny that grace is not conferred by the sacraments from the act itself of receiving them, and affirm that faith only in the Divine promises is sufficient to the obtaining of grace, —"*Si quis dixerit, per ipsa nova legis sacramenta, ex opere operato, non conferri gratiam, sed solùm fidem divinæ promissionis ad gratiam consequendam sufficere, anathema sit.*" (*Conc. Trid. Sess.* vii, *Can.* 8.) It is on this ground also, that the members of that Church argue the superiority of the sacraments of the New Testament to those of the Old; the latter having been effectual only *ex opere operantis*, from the piety and faith of the persons receiving them, while the former confer grace *ex opere operato*, from their own intrinsic virtue, and an immediate physical influence upon the mind of the receiver.

The first great objection to this statement is, that it has even no pretence of authority from Scripture, and grounds itself wholly upon the alleged traditions of the Church of Rome, which, in fact, are just what successive inventors of superstitious practices have thought proper to make them. The second is, that it is decidedly anti-scriptural; for as the only true notion of a sacrament is, that it is the sign and seal of a covenant; and as the saving benefits of the covenant of grace are made expressly to depend upon a true faith; the condition of grace being made by the Church of Rome the act of receiving a sacrament independent of true faith, she impudently rejects the great condition of salvation as laid down in God's word, and sets up in its place another of an opposite kind by mere human authority. The third is, that it debases an ordinance of God from a rational service into a mere charm, disconnected with every mental exercise, and working its effect physically, and not morally. The fourth is its licentious tendency; for as a very large class of sins is by the Romish Church allowed to be venial, and nothing but a mortal sin can prevent the recipient of the sacrament from receiving the grace of God; men may live in the practice of all these venial offences, and consequently in an unrenewed habit of soul, and yet be assured of the Divine favour, and of eternal salvation; thus again boldly contradicting the whole tenor of the New Testament.—Finally, whatever privileges the sacraments are designed to confer, all of them are made by this doctrine to depend, not upon the state of the

receiver's mind, but upon the "intention" of the administrator, who, if not intending to impart the physical virtue to the elements, renders the sacrament of no avail to the recipient, although he performs all the external acts of the ceremony.

The opposite opinion of this gross and unholy doctrine is that maintained by Socinus, and adopted generally by his followers: to which also the notions of some orthodox Protestants have too carelessly leaned. The view taken on the subject of the sacraments by such persons is, that they differ not *essentially* from other rites and ceremonies of religion; but that their peculiarity consists in their emblematic character, under which they represent what is spiritual and invisible, and are memorials of past events. Their sole use therefore is to cherish pious sentiments, by leading the mind to such meditations as are adapted to excite them. Some also add, that they are the badges of a Christian profession, and the instituted means by which Christians testify their faith in Christ.

The fault of the popish opinion is superstitious *excess;* the fault of the latter scheme is that of *defect.* The sacraments are emblematical; they are adapted to excite pious sentiments; they are memorials, at least the Lord's Supper bears this character; they are badges of profession; they are the appointed means for declaring our faith in Christ; and so far is this view superior to the popish doctrine, that it elevates the sacraments from the base and degrading character of a charm and incantation, to that of a spiritual and reasonable service, and instead of making them substitutes for faith and good works, renders them subservient to both.

But if the sacraments are federal rites, that is, if they are covenant transactions, they must have a more extensive and a deeper import than this view of the subject conveys. If circumcision was "a token," and a "seal" of the covenant by which God engaged to justify men by faith, then, as we shall subsequently show, since Christian baptism came in its place, it has precisely the same office; if the passover was a sign, a pledge or seal, and subsequently a memorial, then these characters will belong to the Lord's Supper; the relation of which to the "New Testament," or COVENANT, "in the blood" of our Saviour, is expressly stated by himself. What is the import of the terms *sign* and *seal* will be hereafter considered; but it is enough here to suggest them, to show that the second opinion above stated loses sight of these peculiarities, and is therefore defective.

The third opinion may be stated in the words of the formularies of several Protestant Churches.

The *Heidelberg Catechism* has the following question and reply:—

"What are the sacraments?"

"They are holy visible *signs* and *seals*, ordained by God for this end, that he may more fully *declare* and *seal* by them the promise of his

Gospel unto us; to wit, that not only unto all believers in general, but unto each of them in particular, he freely giveth remission of sins and life eternal, upon the account of that only sacrifice of Christ, which he accomplished upon the cross."

The Church of England, in her Twenty-fifth Article, thus expresses herself:—

"Sacraments ordained of Christ be not only badges or tokens of Christian men's profession, but rather they be sure witnesses, and effectual signs of grace, and God's will toward us, by the which he doth work invisibly in us, and doth not only quicken, but also strengthen and confirm our faith in him."

The Church of Scotland, in the one hundred and sixty-second Question of her Larger Catechism, asks,

"What is a sacrament?" and replies:—

"A sacrament is a holy ordinance, instituted by Christ in his Church, to signify, seal, and exhibit, unto those within the covenant of grace, the benefits of his mediation; to strengthen and increase their faith, and all other graces; to oblige them to obedience; to testify and cherish their love and communion one with another; and to distinguish them from those that are without."

In all these descriptions of a sacrament, terms are employed of just and weighty meaning, which will subsequently require notice. Generally, it may, however, here be observed, that they all assume that there is in this ordinance an express institution of God; that there is this essential difference between them and every other symbolical ceremony, that they are seals as well as signs, that is, that they afford pledges on the part of God of grace and salvation; that as a covenant has two parties, our external acts in receiving the sacraments are indications of certain states and dispositions of our mind with regard to God's covenant, without which none can have a personal participation in its benefits, and so the sacrament is useless where these are not found; that there are words of institution; and a promise also by which the sign and the thing signified are connected together.

The covenant of which they are the seals, is that called by the *Heidelberg Catechism*, "the promise of the Gospel;" the import of which is, that God giveth freely to every one that believeth remission of sins, with all spiritual blessings, and "life eternal, upon the account of that only sacrifice of Christ which he accomplished upon the cross."

As SIGNS, they are visible and symbolical expositions of what the Article of the Church of England, above quoted, calls "the grace of God," and his "will," that is, his "good will toward us;" or, according to the Church of Scotland, "significations of the benefits of his mediation;" that is, they exhibit to the senses, under appropriate emblems, the same benefits as are exhibited in another form in the doc-

trines and promises of the word of God, so that "the eye may affect and instruct the heart," and that for the strong incitement of our faith, our desire, and our gratitude. It ought nevertheless to be remembered that they are not signs merely of the grace of God to us, but of our obligations to him; obligations, however, still flowing from the same grace.

They are also SEALS. A seal is a confirming sign, or, according to theological language, there is in a sacrament a *signum significans*, and a *signum confirmans*; the former of which is said, *significare*, to notify or to declare; the latter *obsignare*, to set one's seal to, to witness. As, therefore, the sacraments, when considered as *signs*, contain a declaration of the same doctrines and promises which the written word of God exhibits, but addressed by a significant emblem to the senses; so also as *seals*, or pledges, they confirm the same promises which are assured to us by God's own truth and faithfulness in his word, (which is the main ground of all affiance in his mercy,) and by his indwelling Spirit by which we are "sealed," and have in our hearts "the earnest" of our heavenly inheritance. This is done by an external and visible institution; so that God has added these ordinances to the promises of his word, not only to bring his merciful purpose toward us in Christ to mind, but constantly to assure us that those who believe in him shall be and are made partakers of his grace. These ordinances are a pledge to them, that Christ and his benefits are theirs, while they are required, at the same time, by faith, as well as by the visible sign, to signify their compliance with his covenant, which may be called "setting to their seal." "The sacraments are God's seals, as they are ordinances given by him for the confirmation of our faith that he would be our covenant God; and they are our seals, or we set our seal thereunto, when we visibly profess that we give up ourselves to him to be his people, and, in the exercise of a true faith, look to be partakers of the benefits which Christ hath purchased, according to the terms of the covenant." (*Dr. Ridgley.*)

The passage quoted from the Heidelberg Catechism has a clause which is of great importance in explaining the design of the sacraments. They are "visible signs and seals ordained by God for this end, that he may more fully declare, and seal by them the promise of his Gospel unto us, to wit, that not only unto all *believers in general, but to each of them in particular*, he freely giveth remission of sins and life eternal, upon the account of that only sacrifice of Christ, which he accomplished upon the cross." For it is to be remarked that the administration is to particular individuals separately, both in baptism and the Lord's Supper,—"Take, eat," "drink ye all of this;" so that the institution of the sign and seal of the covenant, and the acceptance of this sign and seal is a solemn transaction between God and each individual. From which it follows, that to *every one* to whom the sign is exhibited, a seal and pledge of the

invisible grace is also given; and every individual who draws near with a true heart and full assurance of faith, does in *his own* person enter into God's covenant, and to him in particular that covenant stands firm. He renews it also in every sacramental act, the repetition of which is appointed, and being authorized by a Divine and standing institution thus to put in his claim to the full grace of the covenant, he receives thereby continual assurances of the love and faithfulness of a God who changes not; but exhibits the *same* signs and pledges of the *same* covenant of grace, to the constant acceptance of every individual believer throughout all the ages of his Church, which is charged with the ministration of these sacred symbols of his mercy to mankind. This is an important and most encouraging circumstance.

CHAPTER III.

The Institutions of the Church—Baptism.

The *obligation* of baptism rests upon the example of our Lord, who, by his disciples, baptized many that by his discourses and miracles were brought to profess faith in him as the Messias;—upon his solemn command to his apostles after his resurrection, "Go and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," Matt. xxviii, 19. And upon the practice of the apostles themselves, who thus showed that they did not understand baptism, like our Quakers, in a mystical sense. Thus St. Peter, in his sermon upon the day of pentecost, exhorts, "Repent and be baptized every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the Holy Ghost," Acts ii, 38.

As to this sacrament, which has occasioned endless and various controversies, three things require examination,—its nature; its subjects; and its mode.

I. Its Nature. The Romanists, agreeably to their superstitious opinion as to the efficacy of sacraments, consider baptism administered by a priest having a good intention, as *of itself* applying the merits of Christ to the person baptized. According to them, baptism is absolutely necessary to salvation, and they therefore admit its validity when administered to a dying child by any person present, should there be no priest at hand. From this view of its efficacy arises their distinction between sins committed before and after baptism. The hereditary corruption of our nature, and all actual sins committed before baptism, are said to be entirely removed by it; so that if the most abandoned person were to receive it for the first time in the article of death, all his sins would be washed away. But all sins committed after baptism, and the infusion of that grace which is conveyed by the sacrament, must

be expiated by penance. In this notion of regeneration, or the washing away of original sin by baptism, the Roman Church followed Augustine; but as he was a predestinarian, he was obliged to invent a distinction between those who are regenerated, and those who are predestinated to eternal life; so that, according to him, although all the baptized are freed from that corruption which is entailed upon mankind by Adam's lapse, and experience a renovation of mind, none continue to walk in that state but the predestinated. The Lutheran Church also places the efficacy of this sacrament in regeneration, by which faith is actually conveyed to the soul of an infant. The Church of England in her baptismal services has not departed entirely from the terms used by the Romish Church from which she separated. She speaks of those who are by nature "born in sin," being made by baptism "the children of grace," which are, however, words of equivocal import; and she gives thanks to God "that it hath pleased him to regenerate this infant with his Holy Spirit," probably using the term regeneration in the same large sense as several of the ancient fathers, and not in its modern theological interpretation, which is more strict. However this be, a controversy has long existed in the English Church as to the real opinion of her founders on this point; one part of the clergy holding the doctrine of baptismal regeneration, and the absolute necessity of baptism unto salvation; the other taking different views not only of the doctrine of Scripture, but also of the import of various expressions found in the articles, catechisms, and offices of the Church itself. The Quakers view baptism only as spiritual, and thus reject the rite altogether, as one of the "beggarly elements" of former dispensations; while the Socinians regard it as a mere mode of professing the religion of Christ. Some of them indeed consider it as calculated to produce a moral effect upon those who submit to it, or who witness its administration; while others think it so entirely a ceremony of induction into the society of Christians from Judaism and paganism, as to be necessary only when such conversions take place, so that it might be wholly laid aside in Christian nations.

We have called baptism a federal transaction; an initiation into, and acceptance of, the covenant of grace, required of us by Christ as a visible expression and act of that faith in him which he has made a condition of that salvation. It is a point, however, of so much importance to establish the covenant character of this ordinance, and so much of the controversy as to the proper subjects of baptism depends upon it, that we may consider it somewhat at large.

That the covenant with Abraham, of which circumcision was made the sign and seal, Gen. xvii, 7, was the general covenant of grace, and not wholly, or even chiefly, a political and national covenant, may be satisfactorily established.

The first engagement in it was, that God would "greatly bless" Abraham; which promise, although it comprehended temporal blessings, referred, as we learn from St. Paul, more fully to the blessing of his justification by the imputation of his faith for righteousness, with all the spiritual advantages consequent upon the relation which was thus established between him and God, in time and eternity. The second promise in the covenant was, that he should be "the father of many nations," which we are also taught by St. Paul to interpret more with reference to his spiritual seed, the followers of that faith whereof cometh justification, than to his natural descendants. "That the promise might be sure to all the seed, not only to that which is by the law, but to that also which is by *the faith* of Abraham, who is the father of *us all*,"—of all believing Gentiles as well as Jews. The third stipulation in God's covenant with the patriarch, was the gift to Abraham and to his seed of "the land of Canaan," in which the temporal promise was manifesly but the type of the higher promise of a heavenly inheritance. Hence St. Paul says, "By *faith* he sojourned in the land of promise, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise;" but this "faith" did not respect the fulfilment of the temporal promise; for St. Paul adds, "they looked for a city which had foundations, whose builder and maker is God," Heb. xi, 19. The next promise was, that God would always be "a God to Abraham and to his seed after him," a promise which is connected with the highest spiritual blessings, such as the remission of sins, and the sanctification of our nature, as well as with a visible Church state. It is even used to express the felicitous state of the Church in heaven, Rev. xxi, 3. The final engagement in the Abrahamic covenant, was that in Abraham's "seed, all the nations of the earth should be blessed;" and this blessing, we are expressly taught by St. Paul, was nothing less than the justification of all nations, that is, of all believers in all nations, by faith in Christ:—"And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen by faith, preached before the Gospel to Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. So then they who are of faith, are blessed with believing Abraham," they receive the same blessing, justification, by the same means, faith, Gal. iii, 8, 9.

This covenant with Abraham, therefore, although it respected a natural seed, Isaac, from whom a numerous progeny was to spring; and an earthly inheritance provided for this issue, the land of Canaan; and a special covenant relation with the descendants of Isaac, through the line of Jacob, to whom Jehovah was to be "a God," visibly and specially, and they a visible and "peculiar people;" yet was, under all these temporal, earthly, and external advantages, but a higher and spiritual grace embodying itself under these circumstances, as types of a dispensation of salvation and eternal life, to all who should follow the

faith of Abraham, whose justification before God was the pattern of the justification of every man, whether Jew or Gentile, in all ages.

Now, of this covenant, in its spiritual as well as in its temporal provisions, circumcision was most certainly the sacrament, that is, the "sign" and the "seal;" for St. Paul thus explains the case: "And he received the SIGN of circumcision, a SEAL of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised." And as this right was enjoined upon Abraham's posterity, so that every "uncircumcised man child whose flesh of his foreskin was not circumcised on the eighth day," was to be "cut off from his people," by the special judgment of God, and that because "he had broken God's *covenant*," Gen. xvii, 14, it therefore follows that this rite was a constant *publication* of God's covenant of grace among the descendants of Abraham, and its repetition a continual *confirmation* of that covenant, on the part of God, to all practising it in that faith of which it was the ostensible expression.

As the covenant of grace made with Abraham was bound up with temporal promises and privileges, so circumcision was a sign and seal of the covenant in both its parts,—its spiritual and its temporal, its superior and inferior, provisions. The spiritual promises of the covenant continued unrestricted to all the descendants of Abraham, whether by Isaac or by Ishmael; and still lower down, to the descendants of Esau as well as to those of Jacob. Circumcision was practised among them all by virtue of its Divine institution at first; and was extended to their foreign servants, and to proselytes, as well as to their children; and wherever the sign of the covenant of grace was by Divine appointment, there it was as a *seal* of that covenant, to all who believingly used it; for we read of no restriction of its spiritual blessings, that is, its saving engagements, to one line of descent from Abraham only. But over the *temporal* branch of the covenant, and the *external* religious privileges arising out of it, God exercised a rightful sovereignty, and expressly restricted them first to the line of Isaac, and then to that of Jacob, with whose descendants he entered into special covenant by the ministry of Moses. The temporal blessings and external privileges comprised under general expressions in the covenant with Abraham, were explained and enlarged under that of Moses, while the spiritual blessings remained unrestricted as before. This was probably the reason why circumcision was re-enacted under the law of Moses. It was a confirmation of the temporal blessings of the Abrahamic covenant, now, by a covenant of peculiarity, made over to them, while it was still recognized as a consuetudinary rite which had descended to them from their fathers, and as the sign and seal of the covenant of grace, made with Abraham and with all his descendants without exception. This double reference of circumcision, both to the authority of Moses and to that of the patriarchs, is found in the words of our Lord, John vii, 22: "Moses

therefore gave unto you circumcision, not because it is of Moses, but of the fathers;" or, as it is better translated by Campbell, "Moses instituted circumcision among you, (not that it is from Moses, but from the patriarchs,) and ye circumcise on the Sabbath. If on the Sabbath a child receive circumcision, that the *law of Moses* may not be violated," &c.

From these observations, the controversy in the apostolic Churches respecting circumcision will derive much elucidation.

The covenant with Abraham prescribed circumcision as an act of faith in its promises, and a pledge [to perform its conditions] [on the part of his descendants.] But the object on which this faith rested, was "the seed of Abraham," in whom the nations of the earth were to be blessed: which seed, says St. Paul, "is Christ;"—Christ as promised, not yet come. When the Christ had come, so as fully to enter upon his redeeming offices, he could no longer be the object of faith, as still to come; and this leading promise of the covenant being accomplished, the sign and seal of it vanished away. Nor could circumcision be continued in *this view*, by any, without an implied denial that Jesus was the Christ, the expected seed of Abraham. Circumcision also as an institution of Moses, who continued it as the sign and seal of the Abrahamic covenant both in its spiritual and temporal provisions, but with respect to the latter made it also the sign and seal of the restriction of its temporal blessings and peculiar religious privileges to the descendants of Israel, was terminated by the entrance of our Lord upon his office of Mediator, in which office all nations were to be blessed in him. The Mosaic edition of the covenant not only guaranteed the land of Canaan, but the peculiarity of the Israelites, as the people and visible Church of God to the exclusion of others, except by proselytism. But when our Lord commanded the Gospel to be preached to "all nations," and opened the gates of the "common salvation" to all, whether Gentiles or Jews, circumcision, as the sign of a covenant of peculiarity and religious distinction, was done away also. It had not only no reason remaining, but the continuance of the rite involved the recognition of exclusive privileges which had been terminated by Christ.

This will explain the views of the Apostle Paul on this great question. He declares that in Christ there is neither circumcision nor uncircumcision; that neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but "faith that worketh by love;" faith in the seed of Abraham already come and already engaged in his mediatorial and redeeming work; faith, by virtue of which the Gentiles came into the Church of Christ on the same terms as the Jews themselves, and were justified and saved. The doctrine of the non-necessity of circumcision he applies to the Jews as well as to the Gentiles, although he specially resists the attempts of the Judaizers to impose this rite upon the Gentile converts; in which he was supported by the decision of the Holy Spirit

when the appeal upon this question was made to "the apostles and elders at Jerusalem," from the Church at Antioch. At the same time it is clear that he takes two different views of the practice of circumcision, as it was continued among many of the first Christians. The first is that strong one which is expressed in Gal. v, 2–4, "Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, *Christ shall profit you nothing;* for I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. Christ is become of *no effect* unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law, ye are fallen from grace." The second is that milder view which he himself must have had when he circumcised Timothy to render him more acceptable to the Jews; and which also appears to have led him to abstain from all allusion to this practice when writing his epistle to the believing Hebrews, although many, perhaps most of them, continued to circumcise their children, as did the Jewish Christians for a long time afterward. These different views of circumcision, held by the same person, may be explained by considering the different principles on which circumcision might be practised after it had become an obsolete ordinance.

1. It might be taken in the simple view of its first institution, as the sign and seal of the Abrahamic covenant; and then it was to be condemned as involving a denial that Abraham's seed, the Christ, had already come, since, upon his coming, every old covenant gave place to the new covenant introduced by him.

2. It might be practised and enjoined as the sign and seal of the Mosaic covenant, which was still the Abrahamic covenant with its spiritual blessings, but with restriction of its temporal promises and special ecclesiastical privileges to the line of Jacob, with a law of observances which was obligatory upon all entering that covenant by circumcision. In that case it involved, in like manner, the notion of the continuance of an old covenant, after the establishment of the new; for thus St. Paul states the case in Gal. iii, 19, "Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions until THE SEED should come." After that therefore it had no effect:—it had waxed old, and had vanished away.

3. Again: Circumcision might imply an obligation to observe all the ceremonial usages and the moral precepts of the Mosaic law, along with a general belief in the mission of Christ, as necessary to justification before God. This appears to have been the view of those among the Galatian Christians who submitted to circumcision, and of the Jewish teachers who enjoined it upon them; for St. Paul in that epistle constantly joins circumcision with legal observances, and as involving an obligation to do "the whole law," in order to justification. "I testify again to every man that is circumcised that he is a debtor to do THE WHOLE LAW: whosoever of you are *justified* by the law, ye are

fallen from grace." "Knowing that a man is not justified by the *works of the law*, but by the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ," Gal. ii, 16. To all persons therefore practising circumcision in this view, it was obvious that "Christ was become of none effect," the very principle of justification by faith alone in him was renounced, even while his Divine mission was still admitted.

4. But there are two grounds on which circumcision may be conceived to have been *innocently*, though not wisely, practised among the Christian Jews. The first was that of preserving an ancient national distinction on which they valued themselves; and were a converted Jew in the present day disposed to perform that rite upon his children for this purpose only, renouncing in the act all consideration of it as a sign and seal of the old covenants, or as obliging to ceremonial acts in order to justification, no one would censure him with severity. It appears clear that it was under some such view that St. Paul circumcised Timothy, whose mother was a Jewess; he did it because of "the Jews which were in those quarters," that is, because of their national prejudices, "for they knew that his father was a Greek." The second was a lingering notion, that, even in the Christian Church, the Jews who believed would still retain some degree of eminence, some superior relation to God; a notion which, however unfounded, was not one which demanded direct rebuke, when it did not proudly refuse spiritual communion with the converted Gentiles, but was held by men who "rejoiced that God had granted to the Gentiles repentance unto life." These considerations may account for the silence of St. Paul on the subject of circumcision in his Epistle to the Hebrews. Some of them continued to practise that rite, but they were probably believers of the class just mentioned; for had he thought that the rite was continued among them on any principle which affected the fundamental doctrines of Christianity, he would no doubt have been equally prompt and fearless in pointing out that apostasy from Christ which was implied in it, as when he wrote to the Galatians.

Not only might circumcision be practised with views so opposite that one might be wholly innocent, although an infirmity of prejudice; the other such as would involve a rejection of the doctrine of justification by faith in Christ; but some other Jewish observances also stood in the same circumstances. St. Paul, in his Epistle to the Galatians, a part of his writings from which we obtain the most information on these questions, grounds his "doubts" whether the members of that Church were not seeking to be "justified by the law," upon their observing "days, and months, and times, and years." Had he done more than "doubt," he would have expressed himself more positively. He saw their danger on this point; he saw that they were taking steps to this fatal result, by such an observance of these "days," &c, as had a strong

leaning and dangerous approach to that dependence upon them for justification, which would destroy their faith in Christ's solely sufficient sacrifice; but his very doubting, not of the fact of their being addicted to these observances, but of the *animus* with which they regarded them, supposes it possible, however dangerous this Jewish conformity might be, that they might be observed for reasons which would still consist with their entire reliance upon the merits of Christ for salvation. Even he himself, strongly as he resisted the imposition of this conformity to Jewish customs upon the converts to Christianity as a matter of necessity, yet in practice must have conformed to many of them, when no sacrifice of principle was understood; for, in order to gain the Jews, he became "as a Jew."

From these observations, which have been somewhat digressive, we return to observe that not only was the Abrahamic covenant, of which circumcision was the sign and seal, a covenant of grace, but that when this covenant in its ancient form was done away in Christ, then the old sign and seal peculiar to that form was by consequence abolished. If then baptism be not the initiatory sign and seal of the same covenant in its new and perfect form, as circumcision was of the old, this new covenant has no such initiatory rite or sacrament at all; since the Lord's Supper is not initiatory, but, like the sacrifices of old, is of regular and habitual observance. Several passages of Scripture, and the very nature of the ordinance of baptism, will, however, show that baptism is to the new covenant what circumcision was to the old, and took its place by the APPOINTMENT of Christ.

This may be argued from our Lord's commission to his apostles, "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things, whatsoever I have commanded you," Matt. xxviii, 19, 20. "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature; he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved," Mark xvi, 15, 16.

To understand the force of these words of our Lord, it must be observed, that the gate of "the common salvation" was only now for the first time going to be opened to the Gentile nations. He himself had declared that in his personal ministry he was not sent but to "the lost sheep of the house of Israel;" and he had restricted his disciples in like manner, not only from ministering to the Gentiles, but from entering any city of the Samaritans. By what means therefore were "all nations" now to be brought into the Church of God, which from henceforth was most truly to be catholic or universal? Plainly, by baptizing them that believed the "good news," and accepted the terms of the new covenant. This is apparent from the very words; and thus was baptism expressly made the initiatory rite, by which believers of "all nations" were to be introduced into the Church and covenant of

grace; an office in which it manifestly took the place of circumcision, which heretofore, even from the time of Abraham, had been the only initiatory rite into the same covenant. Moses re-enacted circumcision; our Lord not only does *not* re-enact it, but, on the contrary, he appoints *another* mode of entrance into the covenant in its new and perfected form, and that so expressly as to amount to a formal abrogation of the ancient sign, and the putting of baptism in its place. The same argument may be maintained from the words of our Lord to Nicodemus, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." By the kingdom of God, our Lord, no doubt, in the highest sense, means the future state of felicity; but he uses this phrase to express the state of his Church on earth, which is the gate to that celestial kingdom; and generally indeed speaks of his Church on earth under this mode of expression, rather than of the heavenly state. If then he declares that no one can "*enter*" into that Church but by being "born of water and of the Holy Spirit," which heavenly gift followed upon baptism when received in true faith, he clearly makes baptism the mode of initiation into his Church in this passage as in the last quoted; and in both he assigns to it the same office as circumcision in the Church of the Old Testament, whether in its patriarchal or Mosaic form.

A farther proof that baptism has precisely the same federal and initiatory character as circumcision, and that it was instituted for the same ends, and in its place, is found in Colossians ii, 10–12, "And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power; in whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by *the circumcision of Christ*, buried with him in *baptism*," &c. Here baptism is also made the initiatory rite of the new dispensation, that by which the Colossians were joined to Christ *in* whom they are said to be "*complete*;" and so certain is it that baptism has the same office and import now as circumcision formerly,—with this difference only, that the object of faith was then future, and now it is Christ *as come*,—that the apostle expressly calls baptism "*the circumcision of Christ*," the circumcision instituted by him, which phrase he puts out of the reach of frivolous criticism, by adding exegetically,—"buried with him in *baptism*." For unless the apostle here calls baptism "the circumcision of Christ," he asserts that we "put off the body of the sins of the flesh," that is, become new creatures by virtue of our Lord's own personal circumcision; but if this be absurd, then the only reason for which he can call baptism "the circumcision of Christ," or Christian circumcision, is, that it has taken the place of the Abrahamic circumcision, and fulfils the same office of introducing believing men into God's covenant, and entitling them to the enjoyment of spiritual blessings.

But let us also quote Gal. iii, 27–29, "For as many of you as have been baptized INTO Christ, have put on Christ; there is neither Jew nor Gentile, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female, for ye are all one in Christ Jesus; and if ye are Christ's," by thus being "*baptized*," and by "*putting on*" Christ, "then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

The argument here is also decisive. It cannot be denied that it was by circumcision believingly submitted to, that "strangers" or heathens, as well as Jews, became the spiritual "*seed* of Abraham," and "heirs" of the same spiritual and heavenly "*promises*." But the same office in this passage is ascribed to baptism also believingly submitted to; and the conclusion is therefore inevitable. The same *covenant* character of each rite is here also strongly marked, as well as that the covenant is the same, although under a different mode of administration. In no other way could circumcision avail any thing under the Abrahamic covenant, than as it was that visible act by which God's covenant to justify men by faith in the promised seed was accepted by them. It was therefore a part of a federal transaction; that outward act which he who offered a covenant engagement so gracious required as a solemn declaration of the acceptance of the covenanted grace upon the covenanted conditions. It was thus that the Abrahamic covenant was offered to the acceptance of all who heard it, and thus that they were to declare their acceptance of it. In the same manner there is a standing offer of the same covenant of mercy wherever the Gospel is preached. The "good news" which it contains is that of a promise, an engagement, a covenant on the part of God to remit sin, and to save all that believe in Christ. To the covenant in this new form he also requires a visible and formal act of acceptance, which act when expressive of the required faith makes us parties to the covenant, and entitles us through the faithfulness of God to its benefits. "He that *believeth* and is *baptized* shall be saved;" or, as in the passage before us, "As many of you as have been *baptized* into Christ, have put on Christ; and if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

We have the same view of baptism as an act of covenant acceptance, and as it relates to God's gracious engagement to justify the ungodly by faith in his Son, in the often-quoted passage in 1 Peter iii, 20, "Which sometime were disobedient, when once the long suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water. The like figure whereunto *even* baptism doth also now save us, (not the putting away the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ."

When St. Peter calls baptism the "figure," *αντιτυπον*, the antitype of the transaction by which Noah and his family were saved from perishing

with the ungodly and unbelieving world, he had doubtless in mind the *faith* of Noah, and that under the same view as the Apostle Paul, in Heb. xi, "By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which" act of faith "he condemned the world, *and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith*;" an expression of the same import as if he had said, "by which act of faith he was justified before God." It has been already explained in another place (Part ii, chap. xxii, p. 171) in what way Noah's preparing of the ark, and his faith in the Divine promise of preservation, were indicative of his having that direct faith in the Christ to come, of which the Apostle Paul discourses in the eleventh of the Hebrews, as that which characterized "all the elders," and by which they obtained their "good report" in the Church. His preservation and that of his family was so involved in the fulfilment of the more ancient promise respecting the seed of the woman, and the deliverance of man from the power of Satan, that we are warranted to conclude that his faith in the promise respecting his own deliverance from the deluge, was supported by his faith in that greater promise, which must have fallen to the ground had the whole race perished without exception. His building of the ark, and entering into it with his family, are therefore considered by St. Paul as the visible expression of his faith in the ancient promises of God respecting Messiah; and for this reason baptism is called by St. Peter, without any allegory at all, but in the sobriety of fact "the *antitype*" of this transaction; the one exactly answering to the other, as an external expression of faith in the same objects and the same promises.

But the apostle does not rest in this general representation. He proceeds to express in a particular and most forcible manner, the nature of Christian baptism,—"not the putting away of the filth of the flesh; but the answer of a good conscience toward God, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ." Now, whether we take the word επερωτημα, rendered in our translation "answer," for a *demand* or *requirement*; or for the *answer* to a question or questions; or in the sense of *stipulation*; the general import of the passage is nearly the same. If the first, then the meaning of the apostle is, that baptism is not the putting away the filth of the flesh, not a mere external ceremony; but a rite which *demands* or *requires* something of us, in order to the attainment of a "good conscience." What that is, we learn from the words of our Lord: it is faith in Christ: "He that *believeth* and is baptized shall be saved;" which faith is the reliance of a penitent upon the atonement of the Saviour, who thus submits with all gratitude and truth to the terms of the evangelical covenant. If we take the second sense, we must lay aside the notion of some lexicographers and commentators, who think that there is an allusion to the *ancient* practice of demanding

of the candidates for baptism whether they renounced their sins, and the service of Satan, with other questions of the same import; for, *ancient* as these questions may be, they are probably not so ancient as the time of the apostle. We know, however, from the instance of Philip and the eunuch, that there was an explicit *requirement* of *faith*, and as explicit an answer or confession: "And Philip said, If thou believest with all thy heart, thou mayest; and he answered, I believe that Jesus is the Son of God." Every administration of baptism indeed implied this demand; and baptism, if we understand St. Peter to refer to this circumstance, was such an "answer" to the interrogations of the administrator, as expressed a true and evangelical faith. If we take the third rendering of "*stipulation*," which has less to support it critically than either of the others, still as the profession of *faith* was a condition of baptism, that profession had the full force of a formal stipulation, since all true faith in Christ requires an entire subjection to him as Lord, as well as Saviour.

Upon this passage, however, a somewhat clearer light may be thrown, by understanding the word επερωτημα in the sense of that which *asks*, *requires*, *seeks*, something beyond itself. The verb from which it is derived signifies to ask or require; but επερωτημα occurs nowhere else in the New Testament; and but once in the version of the Seventy, Dan. iv, 17, where, however, it is used so as to be fully illustrative of the meaning of St. Peter. Nebuchadnezzar was to be humbled by being driven from men to associate with the beasts of the field; and the vision in which this was represented concludes, "This matter is by the decree of the watchers, and the demand, το επερωτημα, by the word of the Holy Ones, to the *intent* that the living may know, ινα γνῶσιν οι ζωντες, that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men." The Chaldaic word, like the Greek, is from a word which signifies to ask, to require, and may be equally expressed by the word *petitio*, which is the rendering of the Vulgate, or by *postulatum*. There was an *end*, an "*intent*," for which the humbling of the Babylonian king was required "by the word of the Holy Ones" that, by the signal punishment of the greatest earthly monarch, "the living might know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men." In like manner baptism has an end, an "intent," "not the putting away the filth of the flesh," but obtaining "a good conscience toward God;" and it *requires*, *claims* this good conscience through that faith in Christ whereof cometh remission of sins, the cleansing of the "conscience from dead works," and those supplies of supernatural aid by which, in future, men may "live in all good conscience before God." It is thus that we see how St. Peter preserves the correspondence between the act of Noah in preparing the ark as an act of faith by which he was justified, and the act of submitting to Christian baptism, which is also obviously an act of faith, in order to the remission of sins, or the obtaining

a good conscience before God. This is farther strengthened by his immediately adding, "by the resurrection of Jesus Christ:" a clause which our translators by the use of a parenthesis, connect with "baptism doth also now save us;" so that their meaning is, we are saved by baptism through the resurrection of Jesus Christ; and as he "rose again for our justification," this sufficiently shows the true sense of the apostle, who, by our being "saved," clearly means our being justified by faith.

The text, however, needs no parenthesis, and the true sense may be thus expressed: "The antitype to which water of the flood, baptism, doth now save us; not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but that which intently seeks *a good conscience* toward God, through faith in the resurrection of Jesus Christ." But however a particular word may be disposed of, the whole passage can only be consistently taken to teach us that baptism is the outward sign of our entrance into God's covenant of mercy; and that when it is an act of true faith, it becomes an instrument of salvation, like that act of faith in Noah, by which, when moved with fear, he "prepared an ark to the saving of his house," and survived the destruction of an unbelieving world.

From what has been said it will then follow, that the Abrahamic covenant and the Christian covenant is the same gracious engagement on the part of God to show mercy to man, and to bestow upon him eternal life, through faith in Christ as the true sacrifice for sin, differing only in circumstances; and that as the sign and seal of this covenant under the old dispensation was circumcision, under the new it is baptism, which has the same federal character, performs the same initiatory office, and is instituted by the same authority. For none could have authority to lay aside the appointed seal, but the being who first instituted it, who changed the form of the covenant itself, and who has in fact abrogated the old seal by the appointment of another, even baptism, which is made obligatory upon "all nations to whom the Gospel is preached, and is" to continue to "the end of the world."

This argument is sufficiently extended to show that the Antipædobaptist writers have in vain endeavoured to prove that baptism has not been appointed in the room of circumcision; a point on which, indeed, they were bound to employ all their strength; for the substitution of baptism for circumcision being established, one of their main objections to infant baptism, as we shall just now show, is rendered wholly nugatory.

But it is not enough, in stating the nature of the ordinance of Christian baptism, to consider it generally as an act by which man enters into God's covenant of grace. Under this general view several particulars are contained, which it is of great importance rightly to understand. Baptism, both as a *sign* and *seal*, presents an entire correspondence with the ancient rite of circumcision. Let it then be considered,—

1. As a sign. Under this view, circumcision indicated, by a visible

and continued rite, the *placability* of God toward his sinful creatures, and held out the promise of justification, by faith alone, to every truly penitent offender. It went farther, and was the sign of sanctification, or the taking away the pollution of sin, "the superfluity of naughtiness," as well as the pardon of actual offences, and thus was the visible emblem of a regenerate mind, and a renewed life. This will appear from the following passages: "For he is not a Jew which is one outwardly in the flesh; but he is a Jew which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in *the spirit*, and not in *the letter*, whose praise is not of men, but of God," Rom. ii, 28. "And the Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live," Deut. xxx, 6. "Circumcise yourselves to the Lord, and take away the foreskins of your heart, ye men of Judah, and inhabitants of Jerusalem," Jer. iv, 3. It was the *sign* also of peculiar relation to God, as his people: "Only the Lord had a delight in thy fathers to love them, and he chose their seed after them, even you above all people, as it is this day. Circumcise, THEREFORE, the foreskin of your heart, and be no more stiff necked," Deut. x, 15, 16.

In all these respects, baptism, as a *sign* of the new covenant, corresponds to circumcision. Like that, its administration is a constant exhibition of the placability of God to man; like that, it is the initiatory rite into a covenant which promises pardon and salvation to a true faith, of which it is the outward profession; like that, it is the symbol of regeneration, the washing away of sin, and "the renewing of the Holy Ghost;" and like that, it is a sign of peculiar relation to God, Christians becoming, in consequence, "a chosen generation, a peculiar people,"—his "*Church*" on earth, as distinguished from "the world." "For we," says the apostle, "are the circumcision," we are that peculiar people and Church now, which was formerly distinguished by the sign of circumcision, "who worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh."

But as a *sign* baptism is more than circumcision; because the covenant, under its new dispensation, was not only to offer pardon upon believing, deliverance from the bondage of fleshly appetites, and a peculiar spiritual relation to God, all which we find under the Old Testament; but also to bestow *the Holy Spirit*, in his FULNESS, upon all believers; and of this effusion of "the power from on high," baptism was made the visible sign; and perhaps for this, among some other obvious reasons, was substituted for circumcision, because baptism *by effusion*, or *pouring*, (the New Testament mode of baptizing, as we shall afterward show,) was a natural symbol of this heavenly gift. The baptism of John had special reference to the Holy Spirit, which was not to be administered by him, but by Christ, who should come after him. This

gift only honoured John's baptism once, in the extraordinary case of our Lord; but it constantly followed upon the baptism administered by the apostles of Christ, after his ascension, and "the sending of the promise of the Father." Then Peter said unto them, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you for the remission of sins, and *ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost*," Acts ii, 17. "According to his mercy he saved us by the washing of regeneration, and the *renewing of the Holy Ghost*, which he *shed*," or *poured out*, "on us abundantly through Jesus Christ." For this reason Christianity is called "the ministration of the Spirit;" and so far is this from being confined to the miraculous gifts often bestowed in the first age of the Church, that it is made the standing and prominent test of true Christianity to "be led by the Spirit,"—"If ANY MAN have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." Of this great new covenant blessing, baptism was therefore eminently the *sign*; and it represented "the *pouring out*" of the Spirit, "the *descending*" of the Spirit, the "falling" of the Spirit "upon men," by the mode in which it was administered, the POURING of water FROM ABOVE upon the subjects baptized.

As a SEAL also, or *confirming* sign, baptism answers to circumcision. By the institution of the latter, A PLEDGE was constantly given by the Almighty to bestow the spiritual blessings of which the rite was the sign, pardon and sanctification through faith in the future seed of Abraham; peculiar relation to Him as "his people;" and the heavenly inheritance. Of the same blessings, baptism is also the pledge, along with that higher dispensation of the Holy Spirit which it specially represents in emblem. Thus in baptism there is on the part of God a visible assurance of his faithfulness to his covenant stipulations. But it is *our seal* also; it is that act by which we make ourselves parties to the covenant, and thus "set to our seal, that God is true." In this respect it binds US, as, in the other, GOD mercifully binds himself for the stronger assurance of our faith. We *pledge* ourselves to trust wholly in Christ for pardon and salvation, and to obey his laws;—"teaching them 'to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you:'" in that rite also we undergo a mystical death unto sin, a mystical separation from the world, which St. Paul calls being "buried with Christ in or by baptism;" and a mystical resurrection to newness of life, through Christ's resurrection from the dead. Thus in circumcision, an obligation of faith in the promises made to Abraham, and an obligation to holiness of life, and to the observance of the Divine laws, was contracted; and Moses, therefore, in a passage above quoted, argues from that peculiar visible relation of the Israelites to God, produced by outward circumcision, to the duty of circumcising the heart: "The Lord had a delight in thy fathers to love them, and he chose their seed after them, even you above all people; circumcise THEREFORE the foreskin of your heart," Deut. x, 15.

If then we bring all these considerations under one view, we shall find it sufficiently established that baptism is the sign and seal of the covenant of grace under its perfected dispensation;—that it is the grand initiatory act by which we enter into this covenant, in order to claim all its spiritual blessings, and to take upon ourselves all its obligations;—that it was appointed by Jesus Christ in a manner which plainly put it in the place of circumcision;—that it is now the means by which men become Abraham's spiritual children, and heirs with him of the promise, which was the office of circumcision, until "the seed," the Messiah, should come;—and that baptism is therefore expressly called by St. Paul, "the circumcision of Christ," or Christian circumcision, in a sense which can only import that baptism has now taken the place of the Abrahamic rite.

The only objection of any plausibility which has been urged by Anti-pædobaptist writers against the substitution of baptism for circumcision, is thus stated by Mr. Booth: "If baptism succeeded in the place of circumcision, how came it that both of them were in full force at the same time, that is, from the commencement of John's ministry to the death of Christ? For one thing to come in the room of another, and the latter to hold its place, is an odd kind of succession. Admitting the succession pretended, how came it that Paul circumcised Timothy, after he had been baptized?" That circumcision was practised along with baptism from John the Baptist's ministry to the death of Christ may be very readily granted, without affecting the question; for baptism could not be made the sign and seal of the perfected covenant of grace, until that covenant was both perfected, and fully explained and proposed for acceptance, which did not take place until after "the blood of the everlasting covenant" was shed, and our Lord had opened its full import to the apostles who were to publish it "to all nations" after his resurrection. Accordingly we find that baptism was formally made the rite of initiation into this covenant for the first time, when our Lord gave commission to his disciples to "go and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost,"—"he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." John's baptism was upon profession of repentance, and faith in the speedy appearance of Him who was to baptize with the Holy Ghost, and fire; and our Lord's baptism by his disciples was administered to those Jews that believed on him, as the Messias, all of whom, like the apostles, waited for a fuller developement of his character and offices. For since the new covenant was not then fully perfected, it could not be proposed in any other way than to prepare them that believed in Christ, by its partial but increasing manifestation in the discourses of our Lord, for the full declaration both of its benefits and obligations; which declaration was not made until after his resurrection. Whatever the nature and intent of that baptism

which our Lord by his disciples administered, might be, (a point on which we have no information,) like that of John, it looked to something yet to come, and was not certainly that baptism in the name "of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," which was afterward instituted as the standing initiatory rite into the Christian Church. As for the circumcision of Timothy, and the practice of that rite among many of the Hebrew believers, it has already been accounted for. If indeed the Baptist writers could show that the apostles sanctioned the practice of circumcision as a seal of the old covenant, either as it was Abrahamic or Mosaic, or both, then there would be some force in the argument, that one could not succeed the other, if both were continued under inspired authority. But we have the most decided testimony of the Apostle Paul against any such use of circumcision; and he makes it, when practised in that view, a total abnegation of Christ and the new covenant. It follows then, that, when circumcision was continued by any *connivance* of the apostles,—and certainly they did no more than *connive* at it,—it was practised upon some grounds which did not regard it as the seal of any covenant, from national custom, or prejudice, a feeling to which the Apostle Paul himself yielded in the case of Timothy. He circumcised him, but not from any conviction of necessity, since he uniformly declared circumcision to have vanished away with that dispensation of the covenant of which it was the seal through the bringing in of a better hope.

We may here add, that an early father, Justin Martyr, takes the same view of the substitution of circumcision by Christian baptism: "We, Gentiles," Justin observes, "have not received that circumcision according to the flesh, but that which is spiritual—and moreover, for indeed we were sinners, we have received this in *baptism*, through God's mercy, and it is enjoined on all to receive it in like manner."

II. The nature of baptism having been thus explained, we may proceed to consider its SUBJECTS.

That believers are the proper subjects of baptism, as they were of circumcision, is beyond dispute. As it would have been a monstrous perversion of circumcision to have administered it to any person, being of adult age, who did not believe in the true and living God, and in the expected "seed of Abraham," in whom all nations were to be blessed; so is faith in Christ also an indispensable condition for baptism in all persons of mature age; and no minister is at liberty to take from the candidate the visible pledge of his acceptance of the terms of God's covenant, unless he has been first taught its nature, promises, and obligations, and gives sufficient evidence of the reality of his faith, and the sincerity of his profession of obedience. Hence the administration of baptism was placed by our Lord only in the hands of those who were "to preach the Gospel," that is, of those who were to declare God's

method of saving men "through faith in Christ," and to teach them "to observe all things, whatsoever Christ had commanded them." Circumcision was connected with teaching, and belief of the truth taught; and so also is Christian baptism.

The question, however, which now requires consideration is, whether the infant children of believing parents are entitled to be made parties to the covenant of grace, by the act of their parents, and the administration of baptism?

In favour of infant baptism, the following arguments may be adduced. Some of them are more direct than others; but the reader will judge whether, taken all together, they do not establish this practice of the Church, continued to us from the earliest ages, upon the strongest basis of SCRIPTURAL AUTHORITY.

1. As it has been established, that baptism was put by our Lord himself and his apostles in the room of circumcision, as an initiatory rite into the covenant of grace; and as the infant children of believers under the Old Testament were entitled to the covenant benefits of the latter ordinance, and the children of Christian believers are not expressly excluded from entering into the same covenant by baptism; the absence of such an explicit exclusion is sufficient proof of their title to baptism.

For if the covenant be the same in all its spiritual blessings, and an express change was made by our Lord in the *sign* and *seal* of that covenant, but no change at all in the *subjects* of it, no one can have a right to carry that change farther than the Lawgiver himself, and to exclude the children of believers from entering his covenant by baptism, when they had always been entitled to enter into it by circumcision. This is a censurable interference with the authority of God; a presumptuous attempt to fashion the new dispensation in this respect so as to conform it to a mere human opinion of fitness and propriety. For to say, that, because baptism is directed to be administered to believers when adults are spoken of, it follows that children who are not capable of personal faith are excluded from baptism, is only to argue in the same manner as if it were contended, that, because circumcision, when adults were the subjects, was only to be administered to believers, therefore infants were excluded from that ordinance, which is contrary to the fact. This argument will not certainly exclude them from baptism by way of inference, and by no act of the Maker and Mediator of the covenant are they shut out.

2. If it had been intended to exclude infants from entering into the new covenant by baptism, the absence of every prohibitory expression to this effect in the New Testament, must have been misleading to all men; and especially to the Jewish believers.

Baptism was no new ordinance when our Lord instituted it, though he

gave to it a particular designation. It was in his practice to adapt, in several instances, what he found already established, to the uses of his religion. "A parable, for instance, was a Jewish mode of teaching.—Who taught by parables equal to Jesus Christ? And what is the most distinguished and appropriate rite of his religion, but a service grafted on a passover custom among the Jews of his day? It was not ordained by Moses, that a part of the bread they had used in the passover should be the last thing they ate after that supper; yet this our Lord took as he found it, and converted it into a memorial of his body. The 'cup of blessing' has no authority whatever from the original institution; yet this our Lord found in use, and adopted as a memorial of his blood:—taken together, these elements form one commemoration of his death. Probability, arising to rational certainty, therefore, would lead us to infer, that whatever rite Jesus appointed as the ordinance of admission into the community of his followers, he would also adopt from some service already existing—from some token familiar among the people of his nation.

"In fact, we know that 'divers *baptisms*' existed under the law, and we have every reason to believe, that the admission of proselytes into the profession of Judaism, was really and truly marked by a *washing* with water in a ritual and ceremonial manner. I have always understood that Maimonides is perfectly correct when he says, '*In all ages, when a heathen* (or a stranger by nation) *was willing to enter into the covenant of Israel, and gather himself under the wings of the majesty of God, and take upon himself the yoke of the law—he must be first circumcised, and secondly* BAPTIZED, *and thirdly, bring a sacrifice; or if the party were a woman, then she must be first* BAPTIZED, *and secondly bring a sacrifice.*' He adds, '*At this present time when* (the temple being destroyed) *there is no sacrificing, a stranger must be first circumcised, and secondly* BAPTIZED.'

"Dr. Gill, indeed, in his Dissertation on *Jewish Proselyte Baptism*, has ventured the assertion, that 'there is no mention made of any rite or custom of admitting Jewish proselytes by *baptism*, in any writings or records before the time of John the Baptist, Christ and his apostles; nor in any age after them, for the first three or four hundred years; or, however, before the writing of the *Talmuds*.' But the learned doctor has not condescended to understand the evidence of this fact. It does not rest on the testimony of Jewish records solely; it was in circulation among the heathen, as we learn from the clear and demonstrative testimony of Epictetus, who has these words: (he is blaming those who assume the profession of philosophy without acting up to it:) 'Why do you call yourself a Stoic? Why do you deceive the multitude? Why do you pretend to be a *Greek* when you are a *Jew*? a *Syrian*? an *Egyptian*? And when we see any one wavering, we are wont to say,

[illegible]

"The practice then of the Jews—proselyte baptism—was so notorious to the heathen in Italy and in Greece, that it furnished this philosopher with an object of ridicule. Now, Epictetus lived to be very old: he is placed by Dr. Lardner, A. D. 100, by Le Clerc, A. D. 104. He could not be less than sixty years of age when he wrote this; and he might obtain his information thirty or forty years earlier, which brings it up to the time of the apostles. Those who would think that the Jews could institute proselyte baptism at the very moment when the Christians were practising baptism as an initiatory rite, are not to be envied for the correctness of their judgment. The rite certainly dates much earlier, probably many ages. I see no reason for disputing the assertion of Maimonides, notwithstanding Dr. Gill's rude and fallacious language on the subject." (*Facts and Evidences on the Subject of Baptism.*)

This baptism of proselytes, as Lightfoot has fully shewed, was a baptism of families, and comprehended their infant children; and the rite was a symbol of their being washed from the pollution of idolatry. Very different indeed in the extent of its import and office was Christian baptism to the Jewish baptisms, nevertheless, this shows that the Jews were familiar with the rite as it extended to children, in cases of conversions from idolatry; and, so far at least as the converts from paganism to Christianity were concerned, they could not but understand Christian baptism to extend to the infant children of Gentile proselytes, unless them and men, what we nowhere find in the discourses of Christ nor the writings of the apostles, an express exception of them.—In like manner, their own practice of infant circumcision must have misled them: for if they were taught that baptism was the initiatory seal of the Christian covenant, and had taken the place of circumcision, which St. Paul had informed them was "a seal of the righteousness which is by faith," how should they have understood that their children were no longer to be taken into covenant with God, as under their own former religion, unless they had been told that this exclusion of children from all covenant relation to God, was one of those peculiarities of the Christian dispensation in which it differed from the religion of the patriarchs and Moses? This was surely a great change; a change which must have made great impression upon a serious and affectionate Jewish parent, who could now no longer covenant with God for his children, or place his children in a special covenant relation to the Lord of the *whole* earth; a change indeed so great,—a placing of the children of Christian parents in so inferior, and, so to speak, outcast a condition in comparison of the children of believing Jews, while the

Abrahamic covenant remained in force,—that not only, in order to prevent mistake, did it require an express enunciation, but in the nature of the thing it must have given rise to so many objections, or at least inquiries, that explanations of the reason of this peculiarity might naturally be expected to occur in the writings of the apostles, and especially in those of St. Paul. On the contrary, the very phraseology of these inspired men, when touching the subject of the children of believers only incidentally, was calculated to confirm the ancient practice, in opposition to what we are told is the true doctrine of the Gospel upon this point. For instance: how could the Jews have understood the words of Peter at the pentecost, but as calling both upon them and their children, to be baptized?—"Repent and be baptized, for the promise is unto you and to your children." For that both are included, may be proved, says a sensible writer, by considering,

"1. The resemblance between this promise, and that in Gen. xvii, 7, 'To be a God unto thee, and unto thy seed after thee.' The resemblance between these two lies in two things: (1.) Each stands connected with an ordinance, by which persons were to be admitted into Church fellowship; the one by circumcision, the other by baptism. (2.) Both agree in phraseology; the one is, 'to thee and thy seed;' the other is, 'to you and your children.' Now, every one knows that the word *seed* means children; and that *children* means seed; and that they are precisely the same. From these two strongly resembling features, viz. their connection with a similar ordinance, and the sameness of the phraseology, I infer, that the subjects expressed in each are the very same. And as it is certain that parents and infants were intended by the one; it must be equally certain that both are intended by the other.

"2. The sense in which the speaker must have understood the sentence in question: 'The promise is to you, and to your children.' In order to know this, we must consider who the speaker was, and from what source he received his religious knowledge. The apostle was a Jew. He knew that he himself had been admitted in infancy, and that it was the ordinary practice of the Church to admit infants to membership. And he likewise knew, that in this they acted on the authority of that place, where God promises to Abraham, 'to be a God unto him, and unto his seed.' Now, if the apostle knew all this, in what sense could he understand the term children, as distinguished from their parents? I have said that τεκνα, children, and σπερμα, seed, mean the same thing. And as the apostle well knew that the term *seed* intended infants, though not mere infants only; and that mfants were circumcised and received into the Church as being the seed, what else could he understand by the term *children*, when mentioned with their parents? Those who will have the apostle to mean, by the term *children* 'adult

posterity' only, have this infelicity attending them, that they understand the term differently from all other men; and they attribute to the apostle a sense of the word which to him must have been the most forced and infamiliar.

"3. In what sense his hearers must have understood him, when he said, 'The promise is to you, and to your children.'

"The context informs us, that many of St. Peter's hearers, as he himself was, were Jews. They had been accustomed for many hundred years to receive infants by circumcision into the Church; and this they did, as before observed, because God had promised to be a God to Abraham and to his seed. They had understood this promise to mean parents and their infant offspring, and this idea was become familiar by the practice of many centuries. What then must have been their views, when one of their own community says to them, 'The promise is to you and to your children?' If their practice of receiving infants was founded on a promise exactly similar, as it was, how could they possibly understand him, but as meaning the same thing, since he himself used the same mode of speech? This must have been the case, unless we admit this absurdity, that they understood him in a sense to which they had never been accustomed.

"How idle a thing it is, in a Baptist, to come with a lexicon in his hand, to inform us that τεκνα, children, means posterity! Certainly it does, and so includes the youngest infants.

"But the Baptists will have it, that τεκνα, children, in this place, means only *adult posterity*. And if so, the Jews to whom he spoke, unless they understood St. Peter in a way in which it was morally impossible they should, would infallibly have understood him wrong. Certainly, all men, when acting freely, will understand words in that way which is most familiar to them; and nothing could be more so to the Jews, than to understand such a speech as Peter's to mean adults and infants.

"We should more certainly come at the truth, if, instead of idly criticising, we could fancy ourselves Jews, and in the habit of circumcising infants, and receiving them into the Church; and then could we imagine one of our own nation and religion to address us in the very language of Peter in this text, 'The promise is to you and to your children;' let us ask ourselves whether we could ever suppose him to mean adult posterity only!" (*Edwards on Baptism.*)

To this we may add that St. Paul calls the children of believers *holy*, separated to God, and standing therefore in a peculiar relation to him. 1 Cor. vii, 14; a mode of speech which would also have been wholly unintelligible at least to a Jew, unless by some rite of Christianity children were made sharers in its covenanted mercies.

The practice of the Jews, and the very language of the apostles, so naturally leading therefore to a misunderstanding of this sacrament, if

infant baptism be not a Christian rite, and that in respect of its subjects themselves, it was the more necessary that some notice of the exclusion of infants from the Christian covenant should have been given by way of guard. And as we find no intimation of this prohibitory kind, we may confidently conclude that it was never the design of Christ to restrict this ordinance to adults only.

3. Infant children are DECLARED BY CHRIST to be members of his Church.

That they were made members of God's Church in the family of Abraham, and among the Jews, cannot be denied. They were made so by circumcision, which was not that carnal and merely political rite which many Baptist writers in contradiction to the Scriptures make it, but was, as we have seen, the seal of a spiritual covenant, comprehending engagements to bestow the remission of sins and all its consequent blessings in this life, and, in another, the heavenly Canaan. Among these blessings was that special relation, which consisted in becoming a visible and peculiar people of God, his CHURCH. This was contained in that engagement of the covenant, "I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people;" a promise, which, however connected with temporal advantages, was, in its highest and most emphatic sense, wholly spiritual. Circumcision was therefore a *religious*, and not a mere political rite, because the covenant, of which it was the seal, was in its most ample sense spiritual. If therefore we had no direct authority from the words of Christ to declare the infant children of believers *competent* to become the members of his Church, the two circumstances,—that the Church of God, which has always been one Church in all ages, and into which the Gentiles are now introduced, formerly admitted infants to membership by circumcision,—and that the *mode* of initiation into it only has been changed, and not the *subjects*, (of which we have no intimation,) would themselves prove that baptism admits into the Christian Church both believing parents and their children, as circumcision admitted both. The same Church remains; for "the olive tree" is not destroyed; the natural branches only are broken off, and the Gentiles graffed in, and "partake of the root and fatness of the olive tree," that is, of all the spiritual blessings and privileges heretofore enjoyed by the Jews, in consequence of their relation to God as his Church. But among these spiritual privileges and blessings, was the right of placing their children in covenant with God; the membership of the Jews comprehended both children and adults; and the graffing in of the Gentiles, so as to partake of the same "root and fatness," will therefore include a right to put their children also into the covenant, so that they as well as adults may become members of Christ's Church, have God to be "their God," and be acknowledged by him, in the special sense of the terms of the covenant, to be his "people."

tist writers would suggest, that Christ should heal them of diseases; for though St. Mark says, "They brought young children to Christ that he might *touch* them," this is explained by St. Matthew, who says, "that he should put his hands upon them, and pray;" and even in the statement of St. Mark x, 16, it is not said that our Lord healed them, but "put his hands upon them, and *blessed* them;" which clearly enough shows that this was the purpose for which they were brought by their parents to Christ. Nor is there any evidence that it was the practice among the Jews, for common unofficial persons to put their hands upon the heads of those for whom they prayed. The parents here appear to have been among those who believed Christ to be a prophet, "*that Prophet*," or the Messias; and on that account earnestly desired his prayers for their children, and his *official* blessing upon them. That official blessing,—the blessing which he was authorized and empowered to bestow by virtue of his Messiahship,—he was so ready, we might say so anxious, to bestow upon them, that he was "*much displeased*" with his disciples who "rebuked them that brought them," and gave a command which was to be in force in all future time,—"Suffer the little children to come unto me," in order to receive my official blessing; "for of such is the kingdom of God." The first evasive criticism of the Baptist writers is, that the phrase "of such," means of such like, that is, of adults being of a child-like disposition; a criticism which takes away all meaning from the words of our Lord. For what kind of reason was it to offer for permitting children to come to Christ to receive his blessing, that persons not children, but who were of a child-like disposition, were the subjects of the kingdom of God? The absurdity of this is its own refutation, since the reason for children being permitted to come, must be found in themselves, and not in others. The second attempt to evade the argument from this passage is, to understand "the kingdom of God," or "the kingdom of heaven," as St. Matthew has it, exclusively of the heavenly state. We gladly admit, in opposition to the Calvinistic Baptists, that all children, dying before actual sin committed, are admitted into heaven through the merits of Christ; but for this very reason it follows that infants are proper subjects to be introduced into his Church on earth. The phrases, "the kingdom of God," and "the kingdom of heaven," are, however, more frequently used by our Lord to denote the Church in this present world, than in its state of glory; and since all the children brought to Christ to receive his blessing were not likely to die in their infancy, it could not be affirmed, that "of such is the kingdom of heaven," if that be understood to mean the state of future happiness exclusively. As children, they might all be members of the Church on earth; but not all *as children*, members of the Church in heaven, seeing they might live to become adult, and be cast away. Thus, therefore, if children are expressly declared to be members of

Church, and have the full grace of the covenant confirmed and sealed to them, with increase of grace as they are fitted to receive it, beside the advantage of visible connection with the Church, and of that obligation which is taken upon themselves by their parents to train them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

In both views then, "of such is the kingdom of God,"—members of his Church on earth, and of his Church in heaven, if they die in infancy, for the one is necessarily involved in the other. No one can be of the kingdom of God in heaven, who does not stand in a vital sanctifying relation to Christ as the head of his mystical body, the Church, on earth; and no one can be of the kingdom of God on earth, a member of his true Church, and die in that relation, without entering that state of glory to which his adoption on earth makes him an heir, through Christ.

4. The argument from apostolic practice next offers itself. That practice was to baptize the *houses* of them that believed.

The impugners of infant baptism are pleased to argue much from the absence of all express mention of the baptism of infants in the New Testament. This however is easily accounted for, when it is considered that if, as we have proved, baptism took the place of circumcision, the baptism of infants was so much a matter of course, as to call for no remark. The argument from silence on this subject is one which least of all the Baptists ought to dwell upon, since, as we have seen, if it had been intended to exclude children from the privilege of being placed in covenant with God, which privilege they unquestionably enjoyed under the Old Testament, this extraordinary alteration, which could not but produce remark, required to be particularly noted, both to account for it to the mind of an affectionate Jewish parent, and to guard against that mistake into which we shall just now show Christians from the earliest times fell, since they administered baptism to infants. It may farther be observed, that, as to the Acts of the Apostles, the events narrated there did not require the express mention of the baptism of infants, as an act separate from the baptism of adults. That which called for the administration of baptism at that period, as now, when the Gospel is preached in a heathen land, was the believing of adult persons, not the case of persons already believing, bringing their children for baptism. On the supposition that baptism was administered to the children of the parents who thus believed, at the same time as themselves, and in consequence of their believing, it may be asked how the fact could be more naturally expressed, when it was not intended to speak of infant baptism *doctrinally* or *distinctly*, than that such a one was baptized, "and all his *house*;" just as a similar fact would be distinctly recorded by a modern missionary writing to a Church at home practising infant baptism, and having no controversy on the subject in his eye, by saying that he baptized such a heathen, at such a place, with all his *family*.

For, without going into any criticism on the Greek term rendered *house*, it cannot be denied that, like the old English word employed in our translation, and also like the word *family*, it must be understood to comprehend either the children only, to the exclusion of the domestics, or both.

If we take the instances of the baptism of whole "houses," as recorded in the Acts of the Apostles, they must be understood as marking the common mode of proceeding among the first preachers of the Gospel when the head or heads of a family believed, or as insulated and peculiar instances. If the former, which, from what may be called the matter-of-course manner in which the cases are mentioned, is most probable, then innumerable instances must have occurred of the baptizing of houses or families, just as many in fact as there were of the conversion of heads of families in the apostolic age. That the majority of these houses must have included infant children is therefore certain, and it follows that the apostles practised infant baptism.

But let the cases of the baptism of *houses* mentioned in the New Testament be put in the most favourable light for the purpose of the Baptists; that is, let them be considered as insulated and peculiar, and not *instances* of apostolic procedure in all cases where the heads of families were converted to the faith, still the Baptist is obliged to assume that neither in the house of the Philippian jailer, nor in that of Lydia, nor in that of Stephanas, were there any infants at all, since, if there were, they were comprehended in the *whole* houses which were baptized upon the believing of their respective heads. This at least is improbable, and no intimation of this peculiarity is given in the history.

The Baptist writers, however, think that they can prove that all the persons included in these houses were adults; and that the means of showing this from the Scriptures is an instance of "the care of Providence watching over the sacred cause of adult baptism;" thus absurdly assuming that even if this point could be made out, the whole controversy is terminated, when, in fact, this is but an auxiliary argument of very inferior importance to those above mentioned. But let us examine their supposed proofs. "With respect to the jailer," they tell us that "we are expressly assured, that the apostles spoke the word of the Lord to all that were in his house;" which we grant must principally, although not of necessity exclusively, refer to those who were of sufficient age to understand their discourse. And "that he rejoiced, believing in God with all his house;" from which the inference is, that none but adult hearers, and adult believers, were in this case baptized. If so, then there could be no infant children in the house; which, as the jailer appears from his activity to have been a man in the vigour of life, and not aged, is at least far from being certain. But if it be a *proof* in this case that there were no infant children in the jailer's family, that it is said,

he believed and *all his house;* this is not the only believing family mentioned in Scripture from which infants must be excluded. For, to say nothing of the houses of Lydia and Stephanas, the nobleman at Capernaum is said to have believed "and *all his house,*" John iv, 53; so that we are to conclude that there were no infant children in this house also, although his sick son is not said to be his only offspring, and that son is called by him a *child,* the diminutive term παιδιον being used. Again, Cornelius is said, Acts x, 2, to be "one that feared God, and *all his house.*" Infant children therefore must be excluded from his family also; and also from that of Crispus, who is said to have "believed on the Lord with *all his house;*" which *house* appears, from what immediately follows, to have been baptized. These instances make it much more probable that the phrases "fearing God with all his house," and "believing with all his house," include young children under the believing adults, whose religious profession they would follow, and whose sentiments they would imbibe, so that they might be called a Christian family, and that so many houses or families should have been constituted only of adult persons, to the entire exclusion of children of tender years. In the case of the jailer's house, however, the Baptist argument manifestly halts; for it is not said, that they only to whom the word of the Lord was spoken were baptized; nor that they only who "believed" and "rejoiced" with the jailer were baptized. The account of the baptism is given in a separate verse, and in different phrase: "And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes, and was baptized, he *and all his,*" all belonging to him, "straightway;" where there is no limitation of the persons who were baptized to the adults only by any terms which designate them as persons "hearing" or "believing."

The next instance is that of Lydia. The words of the writer of the Acts are "Who when she was baptized, and her *house.*" The great difficulty with the Baptists is, to make a house for Lydia without any children at all, young or old. This, however, cannot be proved from the term itself, since the same word is that commonly used in the Scripture to include children residing at home with their parents: "One that ruleth well his own *house,* having his *children* in subjection with all gravity." It is however conjectured, first, that she had come a trading voyage, from Thyatira to Philippi, to sell purple; as if a woman of Thyatira might not be settled in business at Philippi as a seller of this article. Then, as if to mark more strikingly the hopelessness of the attempt to torture this passage to favour an opinion, "her house" is made to consist of journeymen dyers, "employed in preparing the purple she sold;" which, however, is a notion at variance with the former; for if she was on a mere trading voyage, if she had brought her purple goods from Thyatira to Philippi to sell, she most probably brought them

ready dyed, and would have no need of a dying establishment. To complete the whole, these journeymen dyers, although not a word is said of their conversion, nor even of their existence, in the whole story, are raised into "the brethren," (a term which manifestly denotes the members of the Philippian Church,) whom Paul and Silas are said to have seen and comforted in the house of Lydia, before they departed!

All, however, that the history states is, that "the Lord opened Lydia's heart, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul," and that she was therefore "baptized and her house." From this house no one has the least authority to exclude children, even young children, since there is nothing in the history to warrant the above-mentioned conjectures, and the word is in Scripture used expressly to include them. All is perfectly gratuitous on the part of the Baptists; but, while there is nothing to sanction the manner in which they deal with this text, there is a circumstance strongly confirmatory of the probability that the house of Lydia, according to the natural import of the word rendered house or family, contained children, and that in an infantile state. This is, that in all the other instances in which adults are mentioned as having been baptized along with the head of a family, they are mentioned as "hearing," and "believing," or in some terms which amount to this. Cornelius had called together "his kinsmen and near friends;" and while Peter spake, "the Holy Ghost fell on all them *which heard the word*," "and he commanded them to be baptized." So the adults in the house of the jailer at Philippi were persons to whom "the word of the Lord" was spoken; and although nothing is said of the faith of any but the jailer himself,—for the words are more properly rendered, "and he, believing in God, rejoiced with all his house,"—yet is the joy which appears to have been felt by the adult part of his house, as well as by himself, to be attributed to their faith. Now, as it does not appear that the apostles, although they baptized infant children, baptized unbelieving adult servants because their masters or mistresses believed, and yet the *house* of Lydia were baptized along with herself, when no mention at all is made of the Lord "opening the heart" of these adult domestics, nor of their believing, the fair inference is, that "the house" of Lydia means her children only, and that being of immature years they were baptized with their mother according to the common custom of the Jews, to baptize the children of proselyted Gentiles along with their parents, from which practice Christian baptism appears to have been taken.

The third instance is that of "the house of Stephanas," mentioned by St. Paul, 1 Cor. i, 16, as having been baptized by himself. This family also, it is argued, must have been all adults, because they are said in the same epistle, chap. xvi, 15, to have "addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints," and farther, because they were persons who

took "*a lead*" in the affairs of the Church, the Corinthians being exhorted to "submit themselves unto such, and to every one that helpeth with us and laboureth." To understand this passage rightly, it is how ever necessary to observe, that Stephanas, the head of this family, had been sent by the Church of Corinth to St. Paul at Ephesus, along with Fortunatus and Achaicus. In the absence of the head of the family, the apostle commends "the house," the family of Stephanas to the regard of the Corinthian believers, and perhaps also the houses of the two other brethren who had come with him; for in several MSS. marked by Griesbach, and in some of the versions, the text reads, "Ye know the house of Stephanas and Fortunatus," and one reads also, "and of Achaicus." By the house or family of Stephanas, the apostle must mean his children, or, along with them, his near relations dwelling together in the same family; for, since they are commended for their hospitality to the saints, servants, who have no power to shew hospitality, are of course excluded. But, in the absence of the head of the family, it is very improbable that the apostle should exhort the Corinthian Church to "submit," ecclesiastically, to the wife, sons, daughters, and near relations of Stephanas, and, if the reading of Griesbach's MSS. be followed, to the family of Fortunatus, and that of Achaicus also. In respect of government, therefore, they cannot be supposed "to have had a *lead* in the Church," according to the Baptist notion, and especially as the heads of these families were absent. They were however the oldest Christian families in Corinth, the house of Stephanas at least being called "the first fruits of Achaia," and eminently distinguished for "addicting themselves," *setting themselves on system*, to the work of ministering to the saints, that is, of communicating to the poor saints; entertaining stranger Christians, which was an important branch of practical duty in the primitive Church, that in every place those who professed Christ might be kept out of the society of idolaters; and receiving the ministers of Christ. On these accounts the apostle commends them to the especial regard of the Corinthian Church, and exhorts "*ινα και υμεις υποτασσησθε τοις τοιουτοις*, that you range yourselves under and co-operate with them, and with every one," also, "who helpeth with us, and laboureth;" the military metaphor contained in *εταξαν* in the preceding verse being here carried forward. These families were the oldest Christians in Corinth; and as they were foremost in every good word and work, they were not only to be commended, but the rest were to be exhorted to serve under them as leaders in these works of charity. This appears to be the obvious sense of this otherwise obscure passage. But in this, or indeed in any other sense which can be given to it, it proves no more than that there were adult persons in the family of Stephanas, his wife, and sons, and daughters, who were distinguished for their charity and hospitality. Still it is to be remem-

bered, that the baptism of the oldest of the children took place several years before. The house of Stephanas "was the first fruits of Achaia," in which St. Paul began to preach not later than A. D. 51, while this epistle could not be written earlier at least than A. D. 57, and might be later. Six or eight years, taken from the age of the sons and daughters of Stephanas, might bring the oldest to the state of early youth, and as to the younger branches, would descend to the term of infancy, properly so called. Still farther, all that the apostle affirms of the benevolence and hospitality of the family of Stephanas is perfectly consistent with a part of his children being still very young when he wrote the epistle. An equal commendation for hospitality and charity might be given in the present day, with perfect propriety, to many pious families, several members of which are still in a state of infancy. It was sufficient to warrant the use of such expressions as those of the apostle, that there were in these Corinthian families a few adults, whose conduct gave a decided character to the whole "house." Thus the arguments used to prove that in these three instances of family baptism, there were no young children, are evidently very unsatisfactory; and they leave us to the conclusion, which perhaps all would come to in reading the sacred history, were they quite free from the bias of a theory, that "houses," or "families," as in the commonly received import of the term, must be understood to comprise children of all ages, unless some explicit note of the contrary appears, which is not the case in any of the instances in question.

5. The last argument may be drawn from the antiquity of the practice of infant baptism.

If the baptism of the infant children of believers was not practised by the apostles and by the primitive Churches, when and where did the practice commence? To this question the Baptist writers can give no answer. It is an innovation, according to them, not upon the *circumstances* of a sacrament, but upon its *essential principle;* and yet its introduction produced no struggle; was never noticed by any general or provincial council; and excited no controversy! This itself is strong presumptive proof of its *early* antiquity. On the other hand, we can point out the only ancient writer who opposed infant baptism. This was Tertullian, who lived late in the second century; but his very opposition to the practice proves, that that practice was more ancient than himself; and the principles on which he impugns it, farther show that it was so. He regarded this sacrament superstitiously; he appended to it the *trine* immersion in the name of each of the persons of the trinity; he gives it gravely as a reason why infants should not be baptized, that Christ says, "Suffer the little children to *come* unto me." therefore they must stay till they are able to come, that is, till they are grown up; "and he would prohibit the unmarried, and all in a

widowed state, from baptism, because of the temptations to which they may be liable." The whole of this is solved by adverting to that notion of the efficacy of this sacrament in taking away all *previous* sins, which then began to prevail, so that an inducement was held out for delaying baptism as long as possible, till at length, in many cases, it was postponed to the article of death, under the belief that the dying who received this sacrament were the more secure of salvation. Tertullian, accordingly, with all his zeal, allowed that infants ought to be baptized *if their lives be in danger*, and thus evidently shows that his opposition to the baptism of infants in ordinary, rested upon a very different principle from that of the modern Antipædobaptists. Amidst all his arguments against this practice, Tertullian, however, never ventures upon one which would have been most to his purpose, and which might most forcibly have been urged had not baptism been administered to infants by the apostles and their immediate successors. That argument would have been the *novelty* of the practice, which he never asserts, and which, as he lived so early, he might have proved, had he had any ground for it. On the contrary, Justin Martyr, and Irenæus, in the second century, and Origen in the beginning of the third, expressly mention infant baptism as the practice of their times, and, by the latter, this is assigned to apostolic injunction. Fidus, an African bishop, applied to Cyprian, bishop of Carthage, to know, not whether infants were to be baptized, but whether their baptism might take place before the eighth day after their birth, that being the day on which circumcision was performed by the law of Moses. This question was considered in an African synod, held A. D. 254, at which sixty-six bishops were present, and "it was unanimously decreed, 'that it was not necessary to defer baptism to that day; and that the grace of God, or baptism, should be given to all, and especially to infants.'" This decision was communicated in a letter, from Cyprian to Fidus. (*Cyp. Ep.* 59.) We trace the practice also downward. In the fourth century, Ambrose says, that "infants who are baptized, are reformed from wickedness to the primitive state of their nature;" (*Comment. in Lucam*, c. 10;) and at the end of that century, the famous controversy took place between Augustine and Pelagius concerning original sin, in which the uniform practice of baptizing infants from the days of the apostles was admitted by both parties, although they assigned different reasons for it. So little indeed were Tertullian's absurdities regarded, that he appears to have been quite forgotten by this time; for Augustine says he never heard of any Christian, catholic or sectary, who taught any other doctrine than that infants are to be baptized. (*De Pecc. Mor.* cap. 6.) Infant baptism is not mentioned in the canons of any council; nor is it insisted upon as an object of faith in any creed; and thence we infer that it was a point not controverted at any period of the ancient

Church, and we know that it was the practice in all established Churches. Wall says, that Peter Bruis, a Frenchman, who lived about the year 1030, whose followers were called Petrobrussians, was the first Antipædobaptist teacher who had a regular congregation. (*Hist.* part. 2, c. 7.) The Anabaptists of Germany took their rise in the beginning of the fifteenth century; but it does not appear that there was any congregation of Anabaptists in England, till the year 1640. (*Bishop Tomline's Elements.*) That a practice which can be traced up to the very first periods of the Church, and has been, till within very modern times, its uncontradicted practice, should have a lower authority than apostolic usage and appointment, may be pronounced impossible. It is not like one of those trifling, though somewhat superstitious, additions, which even in very early times began to be made to the sacraments; on the contrary, it involves a principle so important as to alter the very nature of the sacrament itself. For if personal faith be an essential requisite of baptism in all cases; if baptism be a visible declaration of this, and is vicious without it; then infant baptism was an innovation of so serious a nature, that it must have attracted attention, and provoked controversy, which would have led, if not to the suppression of the error, yet to a diversity of practice in the ancient Churches, which in point of fact did not exist, Tertullian himself allowing infant baptism in extreme cases.

The BENEFITS of this sacrament require to be briefly exhibited. Baptism introduces the adult believer into the covenant of grace, and the Church of Christ; and is the seal, the pledge, to him on the part of God, of the fulfilment of all its provisions, in time and in eternity; while, on his part, he takes upon himself the obligations of steadfast faith and obedience.

To the infant child, it is a visible reception into the same covenant and Church,—a pledge of acceptance through Christ,—the bestowment of a title to all the grace of the covenant as circumstances may require, and as the mind of the child may be capable, or made capable, of receiving it; and as it may be sought in future life by prayer, when the period of reason and moral choice shall arrive. It conveys also the present "blessing" of Christ, of which we are assured by his taking children in his arms, and blessing them; which blessing cannot be merely nominal, but must be substantial and efficacious. It secures, too, the gift of the Holy Spirit, in those secret spiritual influences, by which the actual regeneration of those children who die in infancy is effected; and which are a *seed of life* in those who are spared, to prepare them for instruction in the word of God, as they are taught it by parental care, to incline their will and affections to good, and to begin and maintain in them the war against inward and outward evil, so that they may be Divinely assisted, as reason strengthens, to make their calling and election sure.

In a word, it is, both as to infants and to adults, the sign and pledge of that inward grace, which, although modified in its operations by the difference of their circumstances, has respect to, and flows from, a covenant relation to each of the three *persons* in whose *one name* they are baptized,—acceptance by the FATHER,—union with CHRIST as the head of his mystical body, the Church,—and "the communion of the HOLY GHOST." To these advantages must be added the respect which God bears to the believing act of the parents, and to their solemn prayers on the occasion, in both which the child is interested; as well as in that solemn engagement of the parents, which the right necessarily implies, to bring up their child in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

To the parents it is a benefit also. It assures them that God will not only be their God; but "the God of their seed after them;" it thus gives them, as the Israelites of old, the right to covenant with God for their "little ones," and it is a consoling pledge that their dying, infant offspring shall be saved; since he who says, "Suffer little children to come unto me," has added, "for of such is the kingdom of heaven." They are reminded by it also of the necessity of acquainting themselves with God's covenant, that they may diligently teach it to their children; and that as they have covenanted with God for their children, they are bound thereby to enforce the covenant conditions upon them as they come to years,—by *example*, as well as by education; by *prayer*, as well as by profession of the name of Christ.

III. The MODE of baptism remains to be considered.

Although the manner in which the element of water is applied in baptism is but a circumstance of this sacrament, it will not be a matter of surprise to those who reflect upon the proneness of men to attach undue importance to comparative trifles, that it has produced so much controversy. The question as to the proper *subjects* of baptism is one which is to be respected for its importance; that as to the *mode* has occupied more time, and excited greater feeling, than it is in any view entitled to. It cannot, however, be passed over, because the advocates for immersion are often very troublesome to their fellow Christians, unsettle weak minds, and sometimes, perhaps, from their zeal for a form, endanger their own spirituality. Against the doctrine that the only legitimate mode of baptizing is by immersion, we may first observe that there are several strong *presumptions*.

1. It is not probable, that if immersion were the only allowable mode of baptism, it should not have been expressly enjoined.

2. It is not probable, that in a religion designed to be universal, a mode of administering this ordinance should be obligatory, the practice of which is ill adapted to so many climates, where it would either be exceedingly harsh to immerse the candidates, male and female, strong and feeble, in water; or, in some places, as in the higher latitudes, for a

greater part of the year, impossible. Even if immersion were in fact the original mode of baptizing in the name of Christ, these reasons make it improbable that no accommodation of the form should take place, without vitiating the ordinance. This some of the stricter Baptists assert, although they themselves depart from the primitive mode of partaking of the Lord's Supper, in accommodation to the customs of their country.

3. It is still more unlikely, that in a religion of mercy there should be no consideration of health and life in the administration of an ordinance of salvation, since it is certain that in countries where cold bathing is little practised, great risk of both is often incurred, especially in the case of women and delicate persons of either sex, and fatal effects do sometimes occur.

4. It is also exceedingly improbable, that in such circumstances of climate, and the unfrequent use of the bath, a mode of baptizing should have been appointed, which, from the shivering, the sobbing, and other bodily uneasiness produced, should distract the thoughts, and unfit the mind for a collected performance of a religious and solemn act of devotion.

5. It is highly improbable that the three thousand converts at the pentecost, who, let it be observed, were baptized on the same day, were all baptized by immersion; or that the jailer and "all his" were baptized in the same manner *in the night*, although the Baptists have invented "a tank or bath in the prison at Philippi" for that purpose.

Finally, it is most of all improbable, that a religion like the Christian, so scrupulously delicate, should have enjoined the immersion of women by men, and in the presence of men. In an after age, when immersion came into fashion, baptisteries, and rooms for women, and changes of garments, and other auxiliaries to this practice came into use, because they were found necessary to decency; but there could be no such conveniences in the first instance; and accordingly we read of none. With all the arrangements of modern times, baptism by immersion is not a decent practice; there is not a female, perhaps, who submits to it, who has not a great previous struggle with her delicacy; but that, at a time when no such accommodations could be had as have since been found necessary, such a ceremony should have been constantly performing wherever the apostles and first preachers went, and that at pools and rivers in the presence of many spectators, and they sometimes unbelievers and scoffers, is a thing not rationally credible.

We grant that the practice of immersion is ancient, and so are many other superstitious appendages to baptism, which were adopted under the notion of making the rite more emblematical and impressive. We not only trace immersion to the second century, but immersion three times, anointing with oil, signing with the sign of the cross, imposition

of hands, exorcism, eating milk and honey, putting on of white garments, all connected with baptism, and first mentioned by Tertullian; the invention of men like himself, who with much genius and eloquence had little judgment, and were superstitious to a degree worthy of the darkest ages which followed. It was this authority for immersion which led Wall, and other writers on the side of infant baptism, to surrender the point to the Antipædobaptists, and to conclude that immersion was the apostolic practice. Several national Churches, too, like our own, swayed by the same authority, are favourable to immersion, although they do not think it binding, and generally practise effusion or sprinkling.

Neither Tertullian nor Cyprian was, however, so strenuous for immersion as to deny the validity of baptism by aspersion or effusion. In cases of sickness or weakness they only sprinkled water upon the face, which we suppose no modern Baptist would allow. Clinic baptism too, or the baptism of the sick in bed, by aspersion, is allowed by Cyprian to be valid; so that "if the persons recover they need not be baptized by immersion." (Epist. 69.) Gennadius of Marseilles, in the fifth century, says that baptism was administered in the Gallic Church, in his time, indifferently by immersion or by sprinkling. In the thirteenth century, Thomas Aquinas says, "that baptism may be given, not only by immersion, but also by effusion of water or sprinkling with it." And Erasmus affirms, (Epist. 76,) that in his time it was the custom to sprinkle infants in Holland, and to dip them in England. Of these two modes, one only was primitive and apostolic. Which that was we shall just now consider. At present it is only necessary to observe, that immersion is not the only mode which can plead antiquity in its favour; and that, as the *superstition* of antiquity appears to have gone most in favour of baptism by immersion, this is a circumstance which affords a strong presumption, that it was one of those additions to the ancient rite which superstition originated. This may be made out almost to a moral certainty, without referring at all to the argument from Scripture. The "*ancient* Christians," the "*primitive* Christians," as they are called by the advocates of immersion, that is, Christians of about the age of Tertullian and Cyprian, and a little downward,—whose practice of immersion is used as an argument to prove that mode only to have had apostolic sanction,—baptized the candidates NAKED. Thus Wall in his History of Baptism: "The ancient Christians, when they were baptized by immersion, were all baptized *naked*, whether they were men, women, or children. They thought it better represented the putting off of the old man, and also the nakedness of Christ on the cross; moreover, as baptism is a washing, they judged it should be the washing of the body, not of the clothes." This is an instance of the manner in which they affected to *improve* the emblematical character of the ordinance. Robinson also, in his History

of Baptism, states the same thing: "Let it be observed that the primitive Christians baptized *naked*. There is no ancient historical fact better authenticated than this." "They, however," says Wall, "took great care for preserving the modesty of any woman who was to be baptized. None but women came near till her body was in the water; then the priest came, and putting her head also under the water, he departed and left her to the women." Now, if antiquity be pleaded as a proof that immersion was the really *primitive* mode of baptizing, it must be pleaded in favour of the gross and offensive circumstance of baptizing naked, which was considered of as much importance as the other; and then we may safely leave it for any one to say whether he really believes that the three thousand persons mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles were baptized *naked!* and whether when St. Paul baptized Lydia, she was put into the water naked by her women, and that the apostle then hastened "to put her head under water also, using the form of baptism, and retired, leaving her to the women" to take her away to dress! Immersion, with all its appendages, dipping three times, nakedness, unction, the eating of milk and honey, exorcism, &c, bears manifest marks of that disposition to *improve* upon God's ordinances, for which even the close of the second century was remarkable, and which laid the foundation of that general corruption which so speedily followed.

But we proceed to the New Testament itself, and deny that a single clear case of baptism by immersion can be produced from it.

The word itself, as it has been often shown, proves nothing. The verb, with its derivatives, signifies to dip the hand into a dish, Matt. xxvi, 23; to stain a vesture with blood, Rev. xix. 13; to wet the body with dew, Dan. iv. 33; to paint or smear the face with colours; to stain the hand by pressing a substance; to be overwhelmed in the waters as a sunken ship; to be drowned by falling into water; to sink, in the neuter sense; to immerse totally; to plunge up to the neck; to be immersed up to the middle; to be drunken with wine; to be dyed, tinged, and imbued; to wash by effusion of water; to pour water upon the hands, or any other part of the body; to sprinkle. A word then of such large application affords a good proof for sprinkling, or partial dipping, or washing with water, as for immersion in it. The controversy on this accommodating word has been carried on to weariness; and if even the advocates of immersion could prove, what they have not been able to do, that plunging is the *primary* meaning of the term, they would gain nothing, since, in Scripture, it is notoriously used to express other applications of water. The Jews had "divers baptisms" in their service; but these *washings* of the body in or with water, were not immersions, and in some instances they were mere *sprinklings*. The Pharisees "baptized before they ate," but this baptism was "the washing of hands," which in eastern countries is done by

servants *pouring* water over them, and not by *dipping*:—"Here is Elisha, the son of Shaphat, who *poured water on the hands* of Elijah," 2 Kings iii, 11; that is, who acted as his servant. In the same manner the feet were washed: "Thou gavest me no water *upon*, επι, my feet," Luke vii, 44. Again, the Pharisees are said to have held the "washing" or baptism "of cups and pots, brazen vessels, and of tables;" not certainly for the sake of cleanliness, (for all people hold the washing or baptism of such utensils for this purpose,) but from superstitious notions of purification. Now, as "sprinkling" is prescribed in the law of Moses, and was familiar to the Jews, as the mode of purification from uncleanness, as in the case of the sprinkling of the water of separation, Num. xix, 19, it is for this reason much more probable that the baptism of these vessels was effected by sprinkling, than by either pouring or immersion. But that they were not immersed, at least not the whole of them, may be easily made to appear; and if "baptism" as to any of these utensils does not signify immersion, the argument from the use of the word must be abandoned. Suppose, then, the pots, cups, and brazen vessels, to have been baptized by immersion; the "beds" or couches used to recline upon at their meals, which they ate in an accumbent posture, couches which were constructed for three or five persons each to lie down upon, must certainly have been exempted from the operation of a "baptism" by dipping, which was probably practised, like the "baptism" of their hands, before every meal. The word is also used by the LXX, in Dan. iv, 33, where Nebuchadnezzar is said to have been wet with the dew of heaven, which was plainly effected, not by his immersion in dew, but by its descent upon him. Finally, it occurs in 1 Cor. x, 2, "And were *baptized* unto Moses in the *cloud* and in the *sea*;" where also immersion is out of the case. The Israelites were not immersed in the sea, for they went through it, "as on *dry land*;" and they were not immersed in the cloud, which was above them. In this case, if the spray of the sea is referred to, or the descent of rain from the cloud, they were baptized by sprinkling, or at most by pouring; and that there is an allusion to the latter circumstance, is made almost certain by a passage in the song of Deborah, and other expressions in the Psalms, which speak of "rain," and the "pouring out of water," and "droppings" from the "cloud" which directed the march of the Jews in the wilderness. Whatever, therefore, the *primary* meaning of the verb "to baptize" may be, is a question of no importance on one side or the other. Leaving the mode of administering baptism, as a religious rite, out of the question, it is used, generally, at least in the New Testament, not to express immersion in water, but for the act of pouring or sprinkling it; and that baptism, when spoken of as a religious rite, is to be understood as administered by immersion, no satisfactory instance can be adduced.

The baptism of John is the first instance usually adduced in proof of this practice:—The multitudes who went out to him were "baptized of him IN Jordan;" they were therefore *immersed*.

To say nothing here of the laborious, and apparently impossible task imposed upon John, of plunging the multitudes, who flocked to him day by day, into the river; and the indecency of the whole proceeding when women were also concerned; it is plain that the principal object of the evangelist, in making this statement, was to point out the *place* where John exercised his ministry and baptized, and not to describe the mode; if the latter is at all referred to, it must be acknowledged that this was incidental to the other design. Now it so happens that we have a passage which relates to John's baptism, and which can only be fairly interpreted by referring to HIS MODE OF BAPTIZING, as the FIRST consideration: a passage too, which John himself uttered at the very time he was baptizing "in Jordan." "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire." Our translators, in this passage, aware of the absurdity of translating the preposition *εν*, *in*, have properly rendered it *with*; but the advocates of immersion do not stumble at trifles, and boldly rush into the absurdity of Campbell's translation, "I indeed baptize you *in* water, he will baptize you *in* the Holy Ghost and fire." Unfortunately for this translation, we have not only the utter senselessness of the phrases *baptized*, *plunged* in the Holy Ghost, and *plunged* in fire to set against it; but also the very history of the completion of this prophetic declaration, and that not only as to the *fact* that Christ did indeed baptize his disciples with the Holy Ghost and with fire, but also as to the *mode* in which this baptism was effected: "And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of *fire*, and it SAT UPON each of them. And they were all filled with THE HOLY GHOST." Thus the baptism of the Holy Ghost and of fire was a descent UPON, and not an immersion INTO. With this too agree all the accounts of the baptism of the Holy Spirit: they are all *from above*, like the *pouring out* or *shedding* of water upon the head; nor is there any expression in Scripture which bears the most remote resemblance to *immersing*, *plunging* in the Holy Ghost. When our Lord received the baptism of the Holy Ghost, "the Spirit of God DESCENDED like a dove, and LIGHTED upon him." When Cornelius and his family received the same gift, "the Holy Ghost FELL on all them which heard the word;" "and they of the circumcision that believed were astonished, because that on the Gentiles *also* was POURED OUT the gift of the Holy Ghost," which, as the words imply, had been in like manner "*poured out* on them." The common phrase, to "*receive*" the Holy Ghost, is also inconsistent with the idea of being *immersed*, *plunged* into the Holy Ghost; and finally, when St. Paul connects the baptism with water, and the baptism with

the Holy Ghost together, as in the words of John the Baptist just quoted, he expresses the mode of the baptism of the Spirit in the same manner: "According to his mercy he saved us by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which HE SHED ON US abundantly, through Jesus Christ our Saviour," Titus iii, 5, 6. That the mode therefore in which John baptized was by *pouring water upon* his disciples, may be concluded from his using the same word to express the *pouring out*, the *descent*, of the Spirit upon the disciples of Jesus. For if baptism necessarily means immersion, and John baptized by immersion, then did not Jesus *baptize* his disciples with the Holy Ghost. He might *bestow* it upon them, but he did not *baptize* them with it, according to the Immersionists, since he only "*poured* it upon them," "*shed* it upon them," caused it "to *fall* upon them;" none of which, according to them, is baptism. It follows, therefore, that the prediction of John was never fulfilled, because, in their sense of baptizing, none of the disciples of Jesus mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles ever received the Holy Ghost but by *effusion*. This is the dilemma into which they put themselves. They must allow that baptism is not in this passage used for immersion; or they must deny that Jesus ever did *baptize* with the Holy Ghost.

To baptize "*in* Jordan," does not then signify to plunge in the river of Jordan. John made the neighbourhood of Jordan the principal place of his ministry. Either at the fountains of some favoured district, or at some river, baptize he must because of the multitudes who came to his baptism, in a country deficient in springs, and of water in general; but there are several ways of understanding the phrase "in Jordan," which give a sufficiently good sense, and involve no contradiction to the words of John himself, who makes his baptism an *effusion* of water, to answer to the *effusion* of the Holy Spirit, as administered by Jesus. It may be taken as a note of *place*, not of mode. "In Jordan," therefore, the expression of St. Matthew, is, in St. John, "IN Bethabara, beyond," or situate on, "Jordan, *where* John was baptizing;" and this seems all that the expression was intended to mark, and is the sense to be preferred. It is thus equivalent to "*at* Jordan," "*at* Bethabara, situate on Jordan;" *at* being a frequent sense of ἐν. Or it may signify that the water of Jordan was made use of by John for baptizing, however it might be applied; for we should think it no violent mode of expression to say that we washed ourselves *in* a river, although we should mean, not that we plunged ourselves into it, but merely that we took up the water in our hands, and applied it in the way of effusion. Or it may be taken to express his baptizing *in the bed* of the river, into which he must have descended with the baptized, in order to take up the water with his hand, or with some small vessel, as represented in ancient bas-reliefs, to pour it out upon them. This would be the position of any baptizer using a

river at all accessible by a shelving bank; and when within the bed of the stream, he might as truly be said to be in the river, when mere *place* was the principal thing to be pointed out, as if he had been immersed in the water. The Jordan in this respect is rather remarkable, having, according to Maundrell, an outermost bank formed by its occasional "swellings." The remark of this traveller is, "After having descended the *outermost bank*, you go *a furlong* upon a level strand, before you come to the immediate bank of the river." Any of these views of the import of the phrases "in Jordan," "in the river of Jordan," used mainly with intention to point out the *place* where John exercised his ministry, will sufficiently explain them, without involving us in the inexplicable difficulties which embarrass the theory, that John baptized by immersion. To go indeed to a river to baptize, would, in such countries as our own, where water for the mere purpose of effusion may readily be obtained out of cisterns, pumps, &c, very naturally suggest to the simple reader, that the reason for John's choice of a river was, that it afforded the means of immersion. But in those countries the case was different. Springs, as we have said, were scarce, and the water for domestic purposes had to be fetched daily by the women in pitchers from the nearest rivers and fountains, which rendered the domestic supply scanty, and of course valuable. But even if this reason did not exist, baptism in rivers would not, as a matter of course, imply immersion. Of this we have an instance in the customs of the people of Mesopotamia, mentioned in the Journal of Wolfe, the missionary. This sect of Christians call themselves "the followers of St. John the Baptist, who was a follower of Christ." Among many other questions, Mr. Wolfe inquired of one of them respecting their mode of baptism, and was answered, "The priests or bishop baptize children thirty days old. They take the child to the banks of the *river;* a relative or friend holds the child near the surface of the water, while the priest *sprinkles* the element upon the child, and with prayers they name the child." (*Journal*, vol. ii, p. 311.) Mr. Wolfe asks, "Why do they baptize in rivers?" Answer: "Because St. John the Baptist baptized in the river Jordan." The same account was given afterward by one of their bishops or high priests: "They carry the children, after thirty days, to the river, the priest says a prayer, the godfather takes the child to the river, while the priest *sprinkles* it with water." Thus we have in modern times *river* baptism without immersion; and among the Syrian Christians, though immersion is used, it does not take place till after the true baptismal rite, pouring water upon the child in the name of the trinity, has been performed.

The second proof adduced by the Immersionists is taken from the baptism of our Lord, who is said, Matt. iii, 16, "to have gone up straightway *out* of the water." Here, however, the preposition used signifies *from*, and ἀνέβη ἀπὸ τοῦ ὕδατος, is simply "he went up *from* the water"

We grant that this might have been properly said in whatever way the baptism had been previously performed; but then it certainly in itself affords no argument on which to build the notion of the immersion of our Saviour.

The great passage of the Immersionists, however, is Acts viii, 38, 39: "And they went down both *into* the water, both Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him; and when they were come up *out of* the water," &c. This is relied upon as a decisive proof of the *immersion* and *emersion* of the eunuch. If so, however, it proves too much; for nothing is said of the eunuch which is not said of Philip, "They went down BOTH *into* the water,"—"And when THEY were come up *out of* the water;"—and so Philip must have immersed himself as well as the eunuch. Nor will the prepositions determine the case; they would have been employed properly had Philip and the eunuch gone *into* the water by partial or by entire immersion, and therefore come *out of* it on dry land; and with equal propriety, and according to the habitual use of the same prepositions by Greek writers, they would express going *to* the water, without going *into* it, and returning *from* it, and not *out of* it, for εις is spoken of place, and properly signifies *at*, or it indicates motion toward a certain *limit*, and, for any thing that appears to the contrary in the history of the eunuch's baptism, that *limit* may just as well be placed at the nearest verge of the water as in the middle of it. Thus the LXX say, Isa. xxvi, 2, "The king sent Rabshakeh from Lachish, εις, *to* Jerusalem," certainly not *into* it, for the city was not captured. The sons of the prophets "came εις, *to* Jordan to cut wood," 2 Kings vi, 4. They did not, we suppose, go *into* the water to perform that work. Peter was bid to "go, εις, *to* the sea, and cast a hook," not surely to go *into* the sea; and our Lord, Matt. v, 1, "went up, εις, *to* a mountain," but not *into* it. The corresponding preposition εκ, which signifies, when used of place, *from*, *out of*, must be measured by the meaning of εις. When εις means *into*, then εκ means *out of*; but when it means simply *to*, then εκ can express no more than *from*. Thus this passage is nothing to the purpose of the Immersionists.

The next proof relied upon in favour of immersion is, John iii, 22, 23: "After these things came Jesus and his disciples into the land of Judea, and there he tarried with them and baptized; and John also was baptizing in Ænon, near to Salim, because there was *much water* there, and they came and were baptized." The Immersionists can see no reason for either Jesus or John baptizing where there was *much water*, but that they plunged their converts. The true reason for this has however been already given. Where could the multitudes who came for baptism be assembled? Clearly, not in houses. The preaching was in the fields; and since the rite which was to follow a ministry which made such an impression, and drew together such crowds, was

baptism, the necessity of the case must lead the Baptist to Jordan or to some other district where, if a river was wanting, fountains at least existed. The necessity was equal in this case, whether the mode of baptism were that of aspersion, of pouring, or of immersion.

The Baptists, however, have magnified Ænon, which signifies *the fountain of On*, into a place of "many and great waters." Unfortunately, however, no such powerful fountain, sending out many streams of water fit for plunging multitudes into, has ever been found by travellers, although the country has been often visited; and certainly if its streams had been of the copious and remarkable character assigned to them, they could not have vanished. It rather appears, however, that the "much water," or "many waters," in the text, refers rather to the whole tract of country, than to the fountain of On itself; because it appears to be given by the evangelist as the reason why Jesus and his disciples came into the same neighbourhood to baptize. Different baptisms were administered, and therefore in different places. The baptism administered by Jesus at this time was one of multitudes; this appears from the remark of one of John's disciples to his Master: "He that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness, behold, the same baptizeth, and ALL MEN *come to him*." The place or places, too, where Jesus baptized, although in the same district, could not be very near, since John's disciple mentions the multitudes who came to be baptized by Jesus, or rather by his disciples, as a piece of information; and thus we find a reason for the mention of the much water, or many waters, with reference to the district of country itself, and not to the single fountain of On. The tract had probably many fountains in it, which, as being a peculiarity in a country not generally so distinguished, would lead to the use of the expression, "much water," although not one of these fountains or wells might be sufficient to allow of the plunging of numbers of people, and probably was not. Indeed if the disciples of Jesus baptized by immersion, the Immersionists are much more concerned to discover "much water," "many waters," "large and deep streams," somewhere else in the district than at Ænon; because it is plain from the narrative, that the number of candidates for John's baptism had greatly fallen off at that time, and that the people now generally flocked to Christ. Hence the remark of John, verse 30, when his disciples had informed him that Jesus was baptizing in the neighbourhood, and that "all men came to him,"—"He must increase, I must decrease." Hence also the observation of the evangelist in the first verse of the next chapter, "The Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized *more disciples* than John."

As these instances all so plainly fail to serve the cause of immersion, we need not dwell upon the others. The improbability of three thousand persons being immersed on the day of pentecost, has been already

mentioned. The baptism of Saul, of Lydia, of the Philippian jailer, and of the family of Cornelius, are all instances of house baptism, and, for that reason, are still less likely to have been by plunging. The Immersionists, indeed, invent "tanks," or "baths," for this purpose, in all these houses; but, as nothing of the kind appears on the face of the history, or is even incidentally suggested, suppositions prove nothing.

Thus all the presumptions before mentioned, against the practice of immersion, lie full against it, without any relief from the Scriptures themselves. Not one instance can be shown of that practice from the New Testament; while, so far as baptism was emblematical of the pouring out of the Holy Spirit, the doctrine of immersion wholly destroys its significancy. In fact, if the true mode of baptism be immersion only, then must we wholly give up the phrase, the *baptism* of the Holy Spirit, which in any other mode than that of *pouring* out was never administered.

The only argument left for the advocates of immersion is the supposed allusion to the mode of baptism contained in the words of St. Paul, Rom. vi, 3, 4: "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death? Therefore we are *buried with him by baptism*, into death; that, like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." It is necessary, however, to quote the next verses also, which are dependent upon the foregoing, "For if we have been PLANTED together," still by baptism, "in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection; knowing this, that our old man is CRUCIFIED with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin," v, 5–7. Why then do not the advocates of immersion go forward to these verses, so inseparably connected with those they are so ready to quote, and show us a resemblance, not only between baptism by immersion, and being buried with Christ; but also between immersion, and being "planted with Christ?" If the allusion of the apostle is to the planting of a young tree in the earth, there is clearly but a very partial, not a total immersion in the case; and if it be to GRAFTING a branch upon a tree, the resemblance is still more imperfect. Still farther, as the apostle in the same connection speaks of our being "CRUCIFIED with Christ," and that also by baptism, why do they not show us how immersion in water resembles the nailing of a body to a cross?

But this striking and important text is not to be explained by a fancied resemblance between a burial, as they choose to call it, of the body in water, and the burial of Christ; as if a dip or a plunge could have any resemblance to that separation from the living, and that laying aside of a body in the sepulchre, which burial implies. This forced thought darkens

and enervates the whole passage, instead of bringing forth its powerful sentiments into clearer view. The manifest object of the apostle in the whole of this part of his epistle, was to show, that the doctrine of justification by faith alone, which he had just been establishing, could not, in any true believer, lead to licentiousness of life. "What then shall we say? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid! How shall we that are DEAD to sin, live any longer therein?" The reason then which is given by the apostle why true believers CANNOT continue in sin, is, that they are "DEAD to sin," which is his answer to the objection. Now, this mystical death to sin he proceeds to attribute to the INSTRUMENTALITY of baptism, taking it to be an act of that faith in Christ of which it was the external expression; and then he immediately runs into a favourite comparison, which under various forms occurs in his writings, sometimes accompanied with the same allusion to baptism, and sometimes referring only to "faith" as the instrument,—a comparison between the mystical death, burial, and resurrection of believers, and the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. This is the comparison of the text; not a comparison between our mystical death and baptism; nor between baptism, and the death and burial of Christ; either of which lay wide of the apostle's intention. Baptism, as an act of faith, is, in fact, expressly made, not a *figure* of the effects which follow, as stated in the text, but *the means* of effecting them. "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his *death?*" we enter by this means into the experience of its efficacy in effecting a mystical death in us; in other words, WE DIE with him, or as it is expressed in verse 6, "Our old man is *crucified with him.*" Still farther, "by baptism," διὰ τοῦ βαπτίσματος, *through*, or *by means of*, baptism, "we are BURIED with him;" we not only die to sin and the world, but we are separated wholly from it, as the body of Christ was separated from the living world, when laid in the sepulchre; the connection between sin and the world and us is completely broken, as those who are buried and put out of sight are no longer reckoned among men; nay, as the slave (for the apostle brings in this figure also) is by death and burial wholly put out of the power of his former master, so, "that we should not *serve* sin; for he that is dead is *freed* from sin." But we also mystically RISE with him; "that like as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life," having new connections, new habits, new enjoyments, and new hopes. We have a similar passage in Col. ii. 12, and it has a similar interpretation: "Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him, through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead." In the preceding verse the apostle had been speaking of the mystical DEATH of Christians under the phrase, "*putting off the body of the sins of the*

flesh;" then, as in his Epistle to the Romans, he adds our mystical BURIAL with Christ, which is a heightened representation of death, and then also, our RISING again with Christ. Here too all these three effects are attributed to baptism as the means. We *put off the body* of sins "by the circumcision of Christ," that is, as we have seen, by Christian circumcision or baptism; we are *buried* with him by baptism; *εν* being obviously used here, like *δια*, to denote the instrument; and by baptism we *rise* with him into a new life.

Now, to institute a comparison between a mode of baptism and the burial of Christ, wholly destroys the meaning of the passage; for how can the apostle speak of baptism as an *emblem* of Christ's burial, when he argues from it as the instrument of our *death* unto sin, and separation from it by a mystical burial? Nor is baptism here made use of as the emblem of our own spiritual death, burial, and resurrection. As an emblem, even immersion, though it might put forth a clumsy type of burial and rising again, is wanting in not being emblematical of DEATH; and yet all three, our mystical *death*, *burial*, and *rising again*, are distinctly spoken of, and must all be found represented in some TYPE. But the TYPE made use of by the apostle is manifestly not baptism, but the death, the burial, and the resurrection of our Lord; and in this view he pursues this bold and impressive figure to even the verge of allegory, in the succeeding verses: "For he that is dead is freed from sin. Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him: knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once; but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God; LIKEWISE reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord."

In the absence therefore of all proof, that, in any instance found in the New Testament, baptism was administered by immersion; with so many presumptions against that indecent practice as have been stated; with the decisive evidence also of a *designed* correspondence between the baptism, *the pouring out*, of the Holy Spirit, and the baptism, *the pouring out*, of water; we may conclude, with confidence, that the latter was the apostolic mode of administering that ordinance; and that first washing, and then immersion, were introduced later, toward the latter end of the second century, along with several other superstitious additions to this important sacrament, originating in that "will worship" which presumed to destroy the simplicity of God's ordinances, under pretence of (4) rendering them more emblematical and impressive.

(4) Baptism, as an emblem, points out, 1. The washing away of the guilt and pollution of sin. 2. The pouring out of the Holy Spirit. In Scripture it is made an emblem of these two, and of these only. Some of the superstitions above alluded to sin therefore by *excess*; but immersion sins by *defect*. It retains the

Even if immersion had been the original mode of baptizing, we should, in the absence of any command on the subject, direct or implied, have thought the Church at liberty to accommodate the manner of applying water to the body in the name of the trinity, in which the essence of the rite consists, to different climates and manners; but it is satisfactory to discover that all the attempts made to impose upon Christians a practice repulsive to the feelings, dangerous to the health, and offensive to delicacy is destitute of all Scriptural authority, and of really primitive practice.

CHAPTER IV.

The Institutions of the Church—The Lord's Supper.

The agreement and difference between baptism and the Lord's Supper are well stated by the Church of Scotland in its catechism: "The sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper agree, in that the author of both is God; the spiritual part of both is Christ and his benefits; both are seals of the same covenant; to be dispensed by ministers of the Gospel, and none other; and to be continued in the Church of Christ until his second coming." "These sacraments differ, in that baptism is to be administered but once with water,—and that even to infants; whereas the Lord's Supper is to be administered often, in the elements of bread and wine, to represent and exhibit Christ as spiritual nourishment to the soul, and to confirm our continuance and growth in him, and that only to such as are of years and ability to examine themselves."

As baptism was substituted for circumcision, so the Lord's Supper was put by our Saviour in the place of the passover; and was instituted immediately after celebrating that ordinance for the last time with his disciples. The passover was an eminent type of our Lord's sacrifice and of its benefits; and since he was about to fulfil that symbolical rite which from age to age had continued to exhibit it to the faith and hope of ancient saints, it could have no place under the new dispensation. Christ in person became the true passover; and a new rite was necessary to commemorate the spiritual deliverance of men, and to convey

emblematical character of the rite as to the washing away of sin; but it *loses it entirely as to the gift of the Holy Ghost;* and, beyond the washing away of sin, is an emblem of nothing for which we have any Scriptural authority to make it emblematical. Immersion, therefore, as distinct from every other mode of applying water to the body, means nothing. To say that it figures our spiritual death and resurrection, has, we have seen, no authority from the texts used to prove it; and to make a sudden pop under water to be emblematical of burial, is as far-fetched a conceit as any which adorns the Emblems of Quarles, without any portion of the ingenuity.

and confirm its benefits. The circumstances of its institution are explanatory of its nature and design.

On the night when the first born of Egypt were slain, the children of Israel were commanded to take a lamb for every house, to kill it, and to sprinkle the blood upon the posts of their doors, so that the destroying angel might *pass over* the houses of all who had attended to this injunction. Not only were the first-born children thus preserved alive, but the effect was the deliverance of the whole nation from their bondage in Egypt, and their becoming the visible Church and people of God by virtue of a special covenant. In commemoration of these events, the feast of the passover was made annual, and at that time all the males of Judea assembled before the Lord in Jerusalem; a lamb was provided for every house; the blood was poured under the altar by the priests, and the lamb was eaten by the people in their tents or houses. At this domestic and religious feast, every master of a family took the cup of thanksgiving, and gave thanks with his family to the God of Israel. As soon, therefore, as our Lord, acting as the master of his family, the disciples, had finished this the usual paschal ceremony, he proceeded to a new and distinct action: "He took bread," the bread then on the table, "and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave it to them, saying, This is my body which is given for you; this do in remembrance of me. Likewise also the cup after supper," the cup with the wine which had been used in the paschal supper, "saying, This cup is the New Testament in my blood, which is shed for you;" or as it is expressed by St. Matthew, "And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."

That this was the institution of a standing rite, and not a temporary action to be confined to the disciples then present with him, is made certain from 1 Cor. xi, 23–26: "For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks he brake it, and said, Take, eat, this is my body, which is broken for you; this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the New Testament in my blood; this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come." From these words we learn, 1. That St. Paul received a special revelation as to this ordinance, which must have had a higher object than the mere commemoration of an historical fact, and must be supposed to have been made for the purpose of enjoining it upon him to establish this rite in the Churches raised up by him, and of enabling him rightly to understand its authority and purport, where he found it already appointed by the first founders of the first Churches. 2. That the command of

Christ, "This do in remembrance of me," which was originally given to the disciples present with Christ at the last passover, is laid by St. Paul upon the Corinthians. 3. That he regarded the Lord's Supper as a rite to be "*often*" celebrated, and that in all future time until the Lord himself should "come" to judge the world. The perpetual obligation of this ordinance cannot therefore be reasonably disputed.

Of the nature of this great and affecting rite of Christianity, different and very opposite opinions have been formed, arising partly from the elliptical and figurative modes of expression adopted by Christ at its institution; but more especially from the influence of superstition upon some, and the extreme of affected rationalism upon others.

The first is the monstrous theory of the Church of Rome, as contradictory to the Holy Scriptures, whose words it professes to receive in their literal meaning, as it is revolting to the senses and reason of mankind.

"It is conceived that the words, 'This is my body; this is my blood,' are to be understood in their most literal sense; that when Jesus pronounced these words, he changed, by his almighty power, the bread upon the table into his body, and the wine into his blood, and really delivered his body and blood into the hands of his apostles; and that at all times when the Lord's Supper is administered, the priest, by pronouncing these words with a good intention, has the power of making a similar change. This change is known by the name of transubstantiation; the propriety of which name is conceived to consist in this, that although the bread and wine are not changed in figure, taste, weight, or any other accident, it is believed that the substance of them is completely destroyed; that in place of it, the substance of the body and blood of Christ, although clothed with all the sensible properties of bread and wine, is truly present; and that the persons who receive what has been consecrated by pronouncing these words, do not receive bread and wine, but literally partake of the body and blood of Christ, and really eat his flesh, and drink his blood. It is farther conceived, that the bread and wine thus changed, are presented by the priest to God; and he receives the name of priest, because in laying them upon the altar he offers to God a sacrifice, which, although it be distinguished from all others by being without the shedding of blood, is a true propitiatory sacrifice for the sins of the dead and of the living,—the body and blood of Christ, which were presented on the cross, again presented in the sacrifice of the mass. It is conceived, that the materials of this sacrifice, being truly the body and blood of Christ, possess an intrinsic virtue, which does not depend upon the disposition of him who receives them, but operates immediately upon all who do not obstruct the operation by a mortal sin. Hence it is accounted of great importance for the salvation of the sick and dying, that

parts of these materials should be sent to them; and it is understood that the practice of partaking in private of a small portion of what the priest has thus transubstantiated, is, in all respects, as proper and salutary as joining with others in the Lord's Supper. It is farther conceived, that as the bread and wine, when converted into the [body and] blood of Christ, are a natural object of reverence and adoration to Christians, it is highly proper to worship them upon the altar; and that it is expedient to carry them about in solemn procession, that they may receive the homage of all who meet them. What had been transubstantiated was therefore lifted up for the purpose of receiving adoration, both when it was shown to the people at the altar, and when it was carried about. Hence arose that expression in the Church of Rome, the elevation of the host, *elevatio hostiæ*. But, as the wine in being carried about was exposed to accidents inconsistent with the veneration due to the body and blood of Christ, it became customary to send only the bread; and, in order to satisfy those who for this reason did not receive the wine, they were taught that, as the bread was changed into the body of Christ, they partook by concomitancy of the blood with the body. In process of time, the people were not allowed to partake of the cup; and it was said, that when Jesus spake these words, 'Drink ye all of it,' he was addressing himself only to his apostles, so that his command was fulfilled when the priests, the successors of the apostles, drank of the cup, although the people were excluded. And thus the last part of this system conspired with the first in exalting the clergy very far above the laity. For the same persons who had the power of changing bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ, and who presented what they had thus made, as a sacrifice for the sins of others, enjoyed the partaking of the cup, while communion in one kind only was permitted to the people." (*Bishop Tomline on the Articles.*)

So violently are these notions opposed to the common sense of mankind, that the ground to which the Romish writers have always been driven in their defence, is the authority of their Church, and the necessity of implicit faith in its interpretations of Scripture; principles which shut out the use of Scripture entirely, and open the door to every heresy and fanatical folly. But for the ignorance and superstition of Europe during the middle ages, this monstrous perversion of a sacred rite could not have been effected, and even then it was not established as an article of faith without many struggles. Almost all writers on the Protestant controversy will furnish a sufficient confutation of this capital attempt to impose upon the credulity of mankind; and to them, should it need any r futation, the reader may be referred.

The mind of Luther so powerful to throw off dogmas which had nothing but human authority to support them, was, as to the sacrament, held in the bonds of early association. He concluded that the body and

blood of Christ are really present in the Lord's Supper; but, aware of the absurdities and self-contradictions of transubstantiation, he laid hold of a doctrine which some writers, in the Romish Church itself, had continued to prefer to the papal dogma above stated. This was designated by the term *consubstantiation*, which allows that the bread and wine remain the same after consecration as before. Thus he escapes the absurdity of contradicting the very senses of men. It was held, however, by Luther, that though the bread and wine remain unchanged, yet that, *together with them*, the body and blood of Christ are *literally* received by the communicants. Some of his immediate followers did not, however, admit more on this point, than that the body and blood of Christ were really present in the sacrament; but that the manner of that presence was an inexplicable mystery. Yet, in some important respects, Luther and the Consubstantialists wholly escaped the errors of the Church of Rome as to this sacrament. They denied that it was a sacrifice; and that the presence of the body and blood of Christ gave to it any physical virtue acting independently of the disposition of the receiver; and that it rendered the elements the objects of adoration. Their error, therefore, may be considered rather of a speculative than of a practical nature; and was adopted probably in deference to what was conceived to be the literal meaning of the words of Christ when the Lord's Supper was instituted.

A third view was held by some of Luther's contemporaries, which has been thus described: "Carolostadt, a professor with Luther in the university of Wittenberg, and Zuinglius, a native of Switzerland, the founder of the Reformed Churches, or those Protestant Churches which are not Lutheran, taught that the bread and wine in the Lord's Supper are the signs of the absent body and blood of Christ; that when Jesus said, 'This is my body, This is my blood,' he used a figure exactly of the same kind with that, by which, according to the abbreviations continually practised in ordinary speech, the sign is often put for the thing signified. As this figure is common, so there were two circumstances which would prevent the apostles from misunderstanding it, when used in the institution of the Lord's Supper. The one was, that they saw the body of Jesus then alive, and therefore could not suppose that they were eating it. The other was, that they had just been partaking of a Jewish festival, in the institution of which the very same figure had been used. For in the night in which the children of Israel escaped out of Egypt, God said of the lamb which he commanded every house to eat and slay, 'It is the Lord's passover,' Exod. xii, 11; not meaning that it was the action of the Lord passing over every house, but the token and pledge of that action. It is admitted by all Christians, that there is such a figure used in one part of the institution. When our Lord says, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood,' none suppose him to mean the

cup is the covenant, but all believe that he means to call it the memorial, or the sign, or the seal of the covenant. If it be understood, that, agreeably to the analogy of language, he uses a similar figure when he says, 'This is my body,' and that he means nothing more than, 'This is the sign of my body,' we are delivered from all the absurdities implied in the literal interpretation, to which the Roman Catholics think it necessary to adhere. We give the words a more natural interpretation than the Lutherans do, who consider, 'This is my body,' as intended to express a proposition which is totally different, 'My body is with this;' and we escape from the difficulties in which they are involved by their forced interpretation.

"Farther, by this method of interpretation, there is no ground left for that adoration which the Church of Rome pays to the bread and wine; for they are only the signs of that which is believed to be absent. There is no ground for accounting the Lord's Supper to the dishonour of 'the High Priest of our profession,' a new sacrifice presented by an earthly priest; for the bread and wine are only the memorials of that sacrifice which was once offered on the cross. And, lastly, this interpretation destroys the popish idea of a physical virtue in the Lord's Supper; for if the bread and wine are signs of what is absent, their use must be to excite the remembrance of it; but this is a use which cannot possibly exist with regard to any, but those whose minds are thereby put into a proper frame; and therefore the Lord's Supper becomes, instead of a charm, a mental exercise, and the efficacy of it arises not *ex opere operato*, but *ex opere operantis*."

With much truth, this opinion falls short of the whole truth, and therefore it has been made the basis of that view of the Lord's Supper which reduces it to a mere religious commemoration of the death of Christ, with this addition, that it has a *natural fitness* to produce salutary emotions, to possess our minds with religious reflections, and to strengthen virtuous resolutions. Some divines of the Church of England, and the Socinians generally, have adopted, and endeavoured to defend, this interpretation.

The fourth opinion is that of the Reformed Churches, and was taught with great success by Calvin. It has been thus well epitomized by Dr. Hill:—

"He knew that former attempts to reconcile the systems of Luther and Zuinglius had proved fruitless. But he saw the importance of uniting Protestants upon a point, with respect to which they agreed in condemning the errors of the Church of Rome; and his zeal in renewing the attempt was probably quickened by the sincere friendship which he entertained for Melancthon, who was the successor of Luther, while he himself had succeeded Zuinglius in conducting the reformation in Switzerland. He thought that the system of Zuinglius did not come up to

the force of the expressions used in Scripture; and, although he did not approve of the manner in which the Lutherans explain these expressions, it appeared to him that there was a sense in which the full significancy of them might be preserved, and a great part of the Lutheran language might continue to be used. As he agreed with Zuinglius, in thinking that the bread and wine were the signs of the body and blood of Christ, which were not locally present, he renounced both transubstantiation and consubstantiation. He agreed farther with Zuinglius, in thinking that the use of these signs, being a memorial of the sacrifice once offered on the cross, was intended to produce a moral effect. But he taught, that to all who remember the death of Christ in a proper manner, Christ, by the use of these signs, is spiritually present,—present to their minds; and he considered this spiritual presence as giving a significancy, that goes far beyond the Socinian sense, to these words of Paul: 'The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? the bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?' It is not the blessing pronounced which makes any change upon the cup; but to all who join with becoming affection in the thanksgiving then uttered in the name of the congregation, Christ is spiritually present, so that they may emphatically be said to partake, κοινωνειν, μετεχειν, of his body and blood; because his body and blood being spiritually present, convey the same nourishment to their souls, the same quickening to the spiritual life, as bread and wine do to the natural life. Hence Calvin was led to connect the discourse in John vi, with the Lord's Supper: not in that literal sense which is agreeable to popish and Lutheran ideas, as if the body of Christ was really eaten, and his blood really drunk by any; but in a sense agreeable to the expression of our Lord in the conclusion of that discourse, 'The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life;' that is, when I say to you, 'Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me and I in him; he shall live by me, for my flesh is meat indeed,' you are to understand these words, not in a literal but in a spiritual sense. The spiritual sense adopted by the Socinians is barely this, that the doctrine of Christ is the food of the soul, by cherishing a life of virtue here, and the hope of a glorious life hereafter. The Calvinists think, that into the full meaning of the figure used in these words, there enter not merely the exhortations and instructions which a belief of the Gospel affords, but also that union between Christ and his people which is the consequence of faith, and that communication of grace and strength by which they are quickened in well doing, and prepared for the discharge of every duty.

"According to this system, the full benefit of the Lord's Supper is peculiar to those who partake worthily. For while all who eat the bread and drink the wine may be said to show the Lord's death, and may also receive some devout impressions, they only to whom Jesus is

spiritually present share in that spiritual nourishment which arises from partaking of his body and blood. According to this system, eating and drinking unworthily has a farther sense than enters into the Socinian system; and it becomes the duty of every Christian to examine himself, not only with regard to his knowledge, but also with regard to his general conduct, before he eats of that bread and drinks of that cup. It becomes also the duty of those who have the inspection of Christian societies, to exclude from this ordinance persons, of whom there is every reason to believe that they are strangers to the sentiments which it presupposes, and without which none are prepared for holding that communion with Jesus which it implies." (*Theological Lectures.*)

With this view the doctrine of the Church of England seems mainly to agree, except that we may perhaps perceive in her services a few expressions somewhat favourable to the views of Luther and Melancthon, whose authority had great weight with Archbishop Cranmer. This, however, appears only in certain phrases; for the twenty-eighth article declares with sufficient plainness, that "the body of Christ is given, taken, and eaten in the Supper only after a *heavenly* and *spiritual* manner; and the mean whereby the body of Christ is received and eaten in the Supper, is faith." "Some of our early English reformers," says Bishop Tomline, "were Lutherans, and consequently they were at first disposed to lean toward consubstantiation; but they seem soon to have discovered their error, for in the articles of 1552, it is expressly said, 'A faithful man ought not either to believe or openly confess the real and bodily presence, as they term it, of Christ's flesh and blood in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper.' This part of the article was omitted in 1562, probably with a view to give less offence to those who maintained the corporal presence, and to comprehend as many as possible in the established Church." (*Exposition of the Articles.*) The article as it now stands, and not particular expressions in the liturgy, must however be taken to be the opinion of the Church of England upon this point, and it substantially agrees with the New Testament.

The SACRAMENTAL character of this ordinance is the first point to be established, in order to a true conception of its nature and import. It is more than a commemorative rite, it is commemorative sacramentally; in other words, it is a commemorative sign and seal of the covenant of our redemption.

The first proof of this may be deduced from our Lord's words used in the institution of the ordinance: "This is my body, this is my blood." are words which show a most intimate connection between the elements, and that which was represented by them, the *sacrificial* offering of the body and blood of Christ, as the price of our redemption; they were the signs of what was "given *for* us," surrendered to death in our room and stead, that we might have the benefit of liberation from eternal

death. Again, "This is the New Testament," or covenant, "in my blood." The covenant itself was ratified by the blood of Christ, and it is therefore called by St. Paul, "the blood of the everlasting covenant;" and the cup had so intimate a connection with that covenant, as to represent it and the means of its establishment, or of its acquiring validity,—the shedding of the blood of our Saviour. It is clear, therefore, that the rite of the Lord's Supper is a *covenant* rite, and consequently a sacrament; a visible sign and seal on the part of Him who made the covenant, that it was established in, and ratified by, the sacrificial death of Christ.

As it bears this covenant or sacramental character on the part of the Institutor, so also on the part of the recipients. They were all to eat the bread in "remembrance" of Christ; in remembrance, certainly, of his death in particular; yet not as a mere historical event, but of his death as *sacrificial;* and therefore the commemoration was to be on their part an acknowledgment of the doctrine of the vicarious and propitiatory nature of the death of Christ, and an act of faith in it. Then as to the cup, they were commanded to drink of it, for a reason also particularly given, "For this is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins:" the recognition, therefore, implied in the act, was not merely that Christ's blood was shed; but that it was shed as the blood of "the new covenant," and for "the remission of sins;" a recognition which could only take place in consequence of "faith in his blood," as the blood of atonement. Again, says St. Paul, as taught by the particular revelation he received as to the Lord's Supper, "For as often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do *show* or publish the Lord's death until he come;" which publication of his death was not the mere declaration of the fact of "the Lord's death," but of his death according to the apostolic doctrine, as the true propitiation for sin, the benefits of which were to be received by faith. Thus then we see in the Lord's Supper the visible token and pledge of a covenant of mercy in the blood of Christ, exhibited by God its author; and on the part of man a visible acknowledgment of this covenant so ratified by the sacrifice of Christ, and an act of entire faith in its truth and efficacy in order to the remission of sins, and the conferring of all other spiritual benefits. As a SIGN, it exhibits, 1. The infinite love of God, to the world, who gave "his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him might not perish, but have everlasting life." 2. The love of Christ, who "died the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God." 3. The extreme nature of his sufferings, which were unto *death.* 4. The vicarious and sacrificial character of that death, as a sin offering and a propitiation; in virtue of which only, a covenant of grace was entered into with man by the offended God. 5. The benefits derived from it through believing, "remission of sins;"

and the nourishment of the soul in spiritual life and vigour, by virtue of a vital "communion" with Christ, so that it is advanced and perfected in holiness, "until he come" to confer upon his disciples the covenanted blessing of eternal life. As a SEAL it is a constant assurance, on the part of God, of the continuance of this covenant of redemption in full undiminished force from age to age; it is a pledge to every penitent who believes in Christ, and receives this sacrament in profession of his entire reliance upon the merits of Christ's passion for forgiveness, that he is an object of merciful regard and acceptance; there is in it also, as to every one who thus believes and is accepted, a constant exhibition of Christ as the spiritual food of the soul, to be received by faith, that he may grow thereby; and a renewed assurance of the bestowment of the full grace of the new covenant, in the accomplishment of all its promises, both in this life and in that which is to come. In every celebration, the *sign* of all these gracious acts, provisions, and hopes, is exhibited, and God condescends thus to repeat his *pledges* of faithfulness and love to the Church of Christ, purchased by his blood. The members of that Church, on the other hand, renew their acceptance of, and reliance upon, the new covenant; they publish their faith in Christ; they glory in his *cross*, his sacrificial though shameful death, as the wisdom of God, and the power of God; they feast upon the true passover victim by their faith, and they do this with *joy and thanksgiving*, on account of a greater deliverance than that of the Israelites from Egypt, of which they are the subjects. It was this predominance of thanksgiving in celebrating this hallowed rite, which at so early a period of the Church attached to the Lord's Supper the title of "*The Eucharist.*"

We may conclude this view by a few general observations.

1. The very nature of the ordinance of the Lord's Supper excludes from participating in it not only open unbelievers, but all who reject the doctrine of the atonement made by the vicarious death of Christ for "the remission of sins." Such persons have indeed tacitly acknowledged this, by reducing the rite to a mere commemoration of the fact of Christ's death, and of those virtues of humility, benevolence, and patience, which his sufferings called forth. If, therefore, the Lord's Supper be in truth much more than this; if it recognize the sacrificial character of Christ's death, and the doctrine of "faith in his blood," as necessary to our salvation, this is "an altar of which they have no right to eat" who reject these doctrines; and from the Lord's table all such persons ought to be repelled by ministers, whenever, from compliance with custom, or other motives, they would approach it.

2. It is equally evident that when there is no evidence in persons of true repentance for sin, and of desire for salvation, according to the terms of the Gospel, they are disqualified from partaking at "the table

of the Lord." They eat and drink unworthily, and fall therefore into "condemnation." The whole act is indeed on their part an act of bold profanation or of hypocrisy; they profess by this act to repent, and have no sorrow for sin; they profess to seek deliverance from its guilt and power, and yet remain willingly under its bondage; they profess to trust in Christ's death for pardon, and are utterly unconcerned respecting either; they profess to feed upon Christ, and hunger and thirst after nothing but the world; they place before themselves the sufferings of Christ; but when they "look upon him whom they have pierced," they do not "mourn because of him," and they grossly offend the all-present Majesty of heaven, by thus making light of Christ, and "grieving the Holy Spirit."

3. It is a part of Christian discipline in every religious society to prevent such persons from communicating with the Church. They are expressly excluded by apostolic authority, as well as by the original institution of this sacrament, which was confined to Christ's disciples, and ministers would "partake of other men's sins," if knowingly they were to admit to the Supper of the Lord those who in their spirit and lives deny him.

4. On the other hand, the table of the Lord is not to be surrounded with superstitious terrors. All are welcome there who truly love Christ, and all who sincerely desire to love, serve, and obey him. All truly penitent persons; all who feel the burden of their sins, and are willing to renounce them; all who take Christ as the sole foundation of their hope, and are ready to commit their eternal interests to the merits of his sacrifice and intercession, are to be encouraged to "draw near with faith, and to take this holy sacrament to their comfort." In it God visibly exhibits and confirms his covenant to them, and he invites them to become parties to it, by the act of their receiving the elements of the sacrament *in faith*.

5. For the frequency of celebrating this ordinance we have no rule in the New Testament. The early Christians observed it every Sabbath, and exclusion from it was considered a severe sentence of the Church, when only temporary. The expression of the apostle, "as *often* as ye eat this bread," intimates that the practice of communion was frequent; and perhaps the general custom in this country of a monthly administration, will come up to the spirit of the ancient institution. That it was designed, like the passover, to be an annual celebration only, has no evidence from Scripture, and is contradicted by the most ancient practice.

6. The habitual neglect of this ordinance by persons who profess a true faith in Christ, is highly censurable. We speak not now of Quakers and Mystics, who reject it altogether, in the face of the letter of their Bibles; but of many who seldom or never communicate, princi-

pally from habits of inattention to an obligation which they do not profess to deny. In this case a plain command of Christ is violated, though not perhaps with direct intention; and the benefit of that singularly affecting mean of grace is lost, in which our Saviour renews to us the pledges of his love, repeats the promises of his covenant, and calls for invigorated exercises of our faith, only to feed us the more richly with the bread that comes down from heaven. If a peculiar condemnation falls upon them who partake "unworthily," then a peculiar blessing must follow from partaking worthily; and it therefore becomes the duty of every minister to explain the obligation, and to show the advantages of this sacrament, and earnestly to enforce its regular observance upon all those who give satisfactory evidence of "repentance toward God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ."

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